

Abandoned

Ariannak

Aliens/Predator

Complete



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AriannaK

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Summary

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Description:

An ooman is abandoned on an island...but she isn't alone. This yautja is reluctant to let her into his territory-or his heart. (Warning: Rated M for adult-sexual content and violence.) COMPLETE

General Disclaimer

General disclaimer

This is a work of fiction intended for entertainment only. Any similarity to reality is a dreadful accident. I don't own Predator or Alien. No profit is gained from writing these stories.

Stories by this author may briefly mention or describe in detail mature topics and triggers such as:

- Crime, use of weapons, fight sequences.
- Drug and/or alcohol use.
- Death, war, **blood** and gore.
- Violence** and abuse—both verbal and physical. Non-consensual sex and child molestation.
- Kidnapping, child abduction.
- Slurs, racism, harassment, bullying, and **foul language**.
- Eating disorders, mental illness, self-harm and suicide. Emotional trauma.
- Interspecies relationships and intercourse**.
- Sex that may be disturbing to some, such as: BDSM, anal, oral, multiple partners, etc.
- Parts of anatomy may be named in a scientific or sexual context.
- Cultural differences such as: religion, abortion, polygamy, arranged marriage, legal age, public sex and nudity, bestiality, inequality, slavery, euthanasia, death penalty, cannibalism, etc.

Stories by this author are not intended to offend, encourage violence, or erotize rape. However, sensitive readers should not continue.

Chapter 1

Ariana quickly tried to slip away before her owner entered the room and spotted her. She jolted out of her seat, heading for the opposite door, but it was too late. A raspy female voice barked out another order, making her whole body go tense. Ariana skidded to a stop, then reluctantly turned to face the bossy female.

“I said come here stupid”

Ariana inhaled a deep breath, willing herself not to get angry. She had issues with authority figures, which equated pretty much every yautja she came in contact with. Her owner was no exception. The female had bold orange and yellow stripes, dreds almost down to her ass, and just the way she carried herself said ‘boss’.

Ariana drug her feet, trying to stall simply because she could. Instead of tolerating her slow movements this time though, the yautja female marched over and violently drug her forward. Ariana held back the urge to jerk away. She already had long scars down her forearm from being roughly held by the yautja. Her owner had left the scars as a reminder to behave, and they served their purpose.

Rather than fight her, Ariana allowed the tall female to lead her off the ship and onto a dark strip of beach without fussing. Ariana blinked in the darkness, her eyes trying to adjust. She hadn’t even been aware that they’d landed before her owner drug her out there. She thought their next destination was still a few days away.

The yautja walked her about thirty feet from the ship before dropping her arm and spinning back around. When Ariana tried to follow her, the yautja let out a low growl. So Ariana rocked back on her heels and watched the woman walk away. She went back inside the ship, and the door sealed shut behind her. Ariana was always getting yelled at or hit for something, so she remained right where she was, even as she heard the ship’s engine fire up.

The engine hummed louder as the craft lifted up from the sand, then quickly disappeared from sight. Ariana continued staring up at the night sky. Her heart immediately began to quicken and her palms started to sweat. Her mind was going in a million different directions, but she knew her owner couldn’t have just left her on an uninhabited planet alone at night. She touched the cold metal collar around her neck, trying to reassure herself.

Her eyes slowly started to wander to her surroundings though. Ariana timidly surveyed the jungle beside her, at the looming trees and dark foliage. Thick tangled vines hung from the trees, and snaked along the forest floor. A few dark tendrils even reached out onto the sand at her feet. She shuffled away from the shadowy jungle, getting closer to the dark void of water.

After a while, her feet started to ache but she didn’t dare move in case her owner came back for her. After what felt like hours though, Ariana finally had to sit down in the sand, still trying not to panic. The yautja female was probably just teaching her a lesson. Ariana liked to act childish, pretend she didn’t hear commands or do them slowly and this had to be a form a

punishment, nothing else. She numbly stared up at the foreign constellations, the cold night air giving her goosebumps.

The humid rainforest climate was a breeding ground for mold and bacteria. It rapidly grew on his loincloths, on the walls of his cave, and in other areas as well. Anunnaki broke off a thin twig and fed it between his toes where there were accumulations of dirt and mold. He was vigorously scratching away all the foul smelling gunk when he spotted the yautja craft. He carelessly tossed the twig behind him and climbed higher in the tree to watch it.

The small ship landed, but then quickly departed, and he knew that meant someone was dropped off. His own ship was in a hibernative state in space, circling the planet like a satellite would to save energy. He assumed they had come to hunt the same animal he was after. It was an elusive dragon-like creature endemic only to this one island on the planet, and not found anywhere else. To kill the animal would automatically push someone's status to an elite hunter.

Anunnaki wasn't concerned about prey at the moment though. He was more interested in whoever had been dropped off. He'd been on the island alone for several long cycles, and was simply looking forward to anyone to talk to. He left his belongings behind and hiked all night to greet the new hunter.

However, as he reached the beach early in the morning, the scent wasn't what he expected. Anunnaki lingered in the trees, curiously peeking around. With the contrast of temperatures due to the cold night air, a fog was rolling in, but he didn't have any difficulty spotting the ooman. It was a scrawny female, with short dark hair and light blue eyes. She was pacing back and forth down the beach nervously.

Anunnaki was immediately disappointed that he didn't see a yautja accompanying her. He had been looking forward to some company. The ooman had on a slave collar, but when he checked his wrist computer, he found that his ship was still the only one circling the planet. It appeared that the ooman had been dumped and left for dead.

The island hosted only one predator able to kill a yautja, and that was the one he was hunting. The rest of the animals wouldn't stand a chance against him. On top of that, he had shots that would kill any parasites he contracted. His tough skin was impervious to all of the hematophagous insects and small animals on the island that drank blood. Oomans however, were prey to a wide range of things, and he did not think she would last long at all.

Ariana knew that she had to come to terms with the fact that she'd been abandoned, start to build a shelter, and find water. However, she couldn't even bring herself to leave the beach. She didn't think she'd ever acted out bad enough to deserve this. Ariana continued pacing, wanting to believe that the yautja female would come back.

She suddenly lost hope though when she lifted her gaze to the jungle and locked eyes with a metal mask. There was a hunter crouched on a lower branch, staring dead at her. His mask was more detailed-like the guardian predator mask, and had larger eye lenses. Various animal pelts were strapped to his back, giving him a slightly hunchback appearance. Her heartbeats rapidly increased with her panic. She was afraid her owner hadn't just left her there to starve, but rather to be hunted down and butchered.

Anunnaki anticipated the ooman's fear of him, but not what she did next. The little female scoured the ground, ripped a stick out from under a tangle of vines, then held it defensively. Though a stick was a pathetic weapon, he took it as a challenge. Anunnaki confidently clambered down from his perch and began sizing her up. To his surprise, the ooman looked determined and more than ready to lash out at him.

He took one step too close though, and the ooman suddenly flung the stick in the air and bolted for the treeline. His muscles tightened, his body ready for a chase, but he resigned himself. The ooman wasn't a threat, and wasn't a worthy opponent. He watched the light fog swirl behind her, then chuffed dismissively. He decided to head back to his camp and forget about the ooman.

Ariana quickly realized that picking up that stick was a huge mistake. The yautja had just been observing her before. She had provoked him. Yautjas couldn't kill what wasn't armed or dangerous. If she was going to avoid being turned into a trophy, she couldn't react defensively at all. She probably couldn't even make a weapon to hunt with, lest she catch his attention.

Ariana placed a hand on a tree to steady herself. She didn't run far because she didn't think he had followed her, and if he had, she doubted she'd be able to outrun him. Lounging around in a spaceship for hours on end didn't exactly put her in the best shape of her life. Her owner had rarely let her loose outside. Her owner hadn't let her eat at the table either. At night she had been made to sleep in a cage.

The more Ariana thought about her life with the yautja female that had abandoned her, the angrier she grew. She didn't have an owner now, but she wished that the female had at least taken the time to remove the collar. Ariana fed a stick under the metal to try and snap the hinges, but only succeeded in scratching up her neck. She grabbed a rock next, and furiously tried to break the lock on the front. She sawed at the metal, tried everything she could.

When a warm line of tears ran down her cheek, she realized how ridiculous she was being. Ariana chucked the rock as far as she could and wiped her face with a snuffle. A rock wasn't going to break yautja metal. She'd likely be stuck with the ugly collar up until the day she died. And that day would be sooner than she hoped if she didn't pull herself together. She had other priorities before the collar-finding water, food, and building shelter.

Chapter 2

Anunnaki ignored the urge to reposition himself on the branch and resisted itching his crotch. He had been frozen in the same position for over four hours now, waiting for the elusive animal to make an appearance. The animal he was after used the same infrared vision as he did, so he couldn't use the homeostasis netting that kept him warm. Anunnaki's body temp would match his surroundings without the netting, and so he would be invisible to the animal. In the past that wasn't enough though, so this time he had covered his scent with animal urine.

He had insects crawling over every inch of him, lured by the wretched smell. He was miserable, and was starting to doubt that any oversized-lizards were going to show. However, when he heard a small sound, he perked up immediately. His heart started to beat faster with anticipation, and his body was on the edge of an adrenaline rush already.

The animal slowly came into view, and a calm focus overcame Anunnaki. It looked like an agile monitor lizard, but with the longer body of a snake. There was a small population of them on the island, but this one had to be the biggest he'd seen yet. It was as thick around as an anaconda. The animal stopped frequently to flick its tongue across the ground or lift its head, surveying the trees.

The creature was always on guard and would rather run than fight if attacked. However, Anunnaki knew that if he could manage to wound it, then it will try to kill him and it would not stop until the job was done. The animal crept closer suspiciously, before finally deciding to turn back around. Anunnaki's anger flared, as this had happened many times before. It was like the creature could still sense him somehow.

Anunnaki didn't budge, hoping the lizard would wander back and give him an opportunity to attack. He held his breath even, in case it picked up on the gasses he exhaled, or saw his chest moving as he breathed. His efforts were in vain. He watched his trophy slip into a hole in the ground and disappear. It had a network of tunnels under the entire island, where he couldn't follow.

Anunnaki let his nails dig into the bark of the tree, trying to vent some of his frustration. He'd tried everything. He'd tried to trap the animal, knowing that would send it into a panic and make it fight, but it always managed to escape instead. He'd tried baits, tracking devices, long distance weapons, and more. If he covered the entrances to its tunnels, it dug more.

As worse as his day was progressing though, it apparently wasn't as bad as the oomans. As soon as he jumped down from the tree, the ooman went streaking past him in a blur. A feral yaut hound followed close behind her. A population of hounds left on the island after their masters had been killed had continued to breed. The yaut hound was faster and had more stamina than a scrawny ooman. Anunnaki assumed was dead for sure.

He turned the opposite way, uninterested until he heard a high-pitched yelp. He cocked his head, listening then to the unnatural thumping sounds that followed. Curiosity got the best of him, and he went to investigate. He found the ooman hunched over the yaut hound, bashing in

its skull with a rock. It was a shame she ruined a perfectly good trophy, but at the same time, Anunnaki was almost impressed.

Ariana fought to get her breathing under control, and stared down at the dead hound. Blood oozed from its face and streaked down its long white tusks. She didn't even have a scratch on her. It was unbelievable. Perhaps she was capable of tackling this jungle after all. However, just when she was starting to gain some confidence, the hunter showed up again.

He was only about thirty feet away, crouched in between two moss-covered tree trunks, staring her down. She quickly realized that the rock was now a weapon though, and tossed it away. After a few moments, the hunter stood up and left. So she was right-the yautja was out to get her. As soon as she showed aggression he showed up, and when she dropped the rock he left.

She almost walked away from the dead yaut hound before realizing the mistake she was about to make. The yaut hound could be food for days, if she could cook it. Getting a fire going wasn't easy though. Even the nights in Mexico were hot, and she had never needed to know how to build a fire. Her former owner hadn't bothered to teach her either.

Ariana systematically began to rub sticks together until blisters formed. After that, she wrapped her hands in grass and leaves to prevent anymore rubbing, but her blisters started to bleed anyway. Her owner was always calling her a stupid ooman. She didn't want to give up and prove the yautja right. Her hands were cramping and she finally had to give it a break though.

She wandered away to find a good place to go to the bathroom, but by the time she returned the yaut hound was already being eaten. Little spiny snakes were ripping off big chunks of her kill. She couldn't believe it! Ariana panicked and grabbed the closest stick. When she tried to swat them away though, a foul stench like a skunk assaulted her. It made her gag so bad she had to leave.

Fueled by her anger, she went back to trying to light a fire. She selected the driest sticks and used bark instead of leaves for tinder. Ariana pictured scaring off the spiny snakes with the fire. She'd have warmth at night, protection from other animals, and be able to cook a meal. It was hopeless though-no matter what technique she tried, she never saw even a spark.

She meandered through the jungle then, feeling defeated, but at the same time seeking out water. There were no streams, only the ocean. Without a fire, she didn't know how to purify water. In Mexico she bought purified water at the store or it was delivered right to her house. When it started to rain, she finally got something to drink but it presented a new set of problems.

The rain was quickly becoming worse, so even if she had managed to create a flame, she wouldn't have been able to preserve it. She needed a shelter out of the rain to be able to attempt a fire again. The ground was quickly getting slick and muddy. The best shelter she could manage right then was a rotted crevice in a huge tree trunk. She squeezed herself inside and tried to get comfortable. It was cramped, dirty, and she quickly realized that all the sticks were soaking wet and unusable now. She wouldn't be able to try starting a fire again. Everything was beginning to feel impossible.

Ariana brought her knees up to her chest, ready to wait out the storm. Not everyone was deterred by the downpour like her though, and only a few minutes later she heard something approaching. Another feral yaut hound stuck its muzzle into the hollowed trunk, breathing heavily. Ariana squeezed herself against the back wall and held her breath. It decided that it liked what it smelled, and started to carve away at the bark with its claws and tusks.

Ariana couldn't help but scream as its long tusks came closer to her. She kicked at its face, but it hardly budged. The crevice in the hollow tree trunk was steadily getting wider, and Ariana had no choice but to try and climb up through the center of the tree. The wood was damp and rotted though, making it hard to gain a foothold. She desperately scratched at the insides of the trunk, shrieking every time she felt a tusk graze her. She eventually managed to wedge herself up in the hollow trunk, her arms and legs braced against the sides.

After the rain, Anunnaki lounged in a tree, waiting for his next meal to pass by. He had assumed that on such a large island that he wouldn't see the ooman often, but that didn't turn out to be true. He cocked his head and watched her pass under him. She was swatting bugs, itching, and combing her fingers through her hair constantly and he saw it as a waste of energy. His every move was calculated and precise while she was slowly draining valuable energy that would be needed later.

As he watched her, it suddenly occurred to him that the ooman could be an easy meal. He preferred not to eat the hounds, since they had been domesticated by Yautjas. Between the feral hounds then and the huge monitor lizard, small game was scarce. He didn't think the ooman could survive for much longer anyway.

Chapter 3

He stealthily followed her, enjoying the idea of an quick meal. Oomans were soft, relatively hairless, and tasted just fine to him. She slowed down to carve a spear with a jagged rock, giving him a perfect opportunity. Just when he was about to strike though, she bent over and picked something up off the ground. It was one of the bracelets he'd lost while tussling with a yaut hound.

There was a lot about yautja life that Ariana had enjoyed. She wished that she had been a better servant to the yautja female. At first she didn't know what she had done wrong to be dumped in the wilderness. But the real question was what had she done right not to deserve it. She had taken every cooked meal, every soft bed, absolutely everything for granted. The bracelet reminded her of everything she'd lost.

Anunnaki watched the ooman fiddle with the bracelet, fixing the loop at the end that had broken. She must have admired the polished stones and dyed leather, because she slipped it around her wrist to wear it. For some reason, seeing her wearing his jewelry as her own angered him. He climbed down from the tree in a haste, planning to tear it off her. As soon as he approached though, she froze in place and dropped the spear she had been trying to make.

He suddenly hesitated. She acted too ridiculous, looked too innocent. Anunnaki uttered a growl but quickly climbed the nearest tree to get out of sight. Ariana stood there for a long time, making sure he was really gone. She searched the tree canopy for him one more time then stared down at the spear. She was hoping that after a few run ins with the hunter he'd leave her alone, but as soon as she started to make a weapon, he was there. She moved on, leaving the spear behind so he wouldn't stalk her.

He probably shouldn't have let her live. In the next few days, her presence grew increasingly annoying. She threw off sensors he'd placed to notify him of big game. She stole bait he left out and used it for her own. Her scent scared away smaller animals he hunted to eat, but attracted clumsy and untrained yaut hounds-which kept his trophy kill hiding in its tunnels.

Just the amount noise she made pushing her way through the jungle had a negative effect for Anunnaki. He'd hunkered down in an area that didn't carry the oomans scent to wait for the lizard. Only a couple hours went by before the ooman came wandering into the area, sending birds and small animals scurrying away, no doubt alerting his prey to her presence. He thought about running her off, but if any lizards had been close by underground, they were already gone. It was best if he just left and found somewhere else to hunt.

Instead, he stayed to torment her. Anunnaki grabbed a fat stick-insect in his claws, and crept closer to her. When he had a good shot, he released the insect. It dropped from the tree and landed on her back. The ooman had shown a disgust for insects in the past, and she reacted exactly as Anunnaki had expected. She shrieked and jumped around even when the bug was already long gone.

He followed her everywhere she went for the next few hours, jumping from branches, swinging on vines, only engaging his cloaking device when absolutely necessary. Anunnaki dropped various harmless reptiles and big insects on her back. He even reached into a hollow crevice and scooped out a handful insect larva. Anunnaki crouched on a low branch and sprinkled them into her hair. The ooman screamed and took off running, shaking her hair out as she went.

She finally came to a small bay she visited often. He'd seen her placing sticks upright in the water, and coming back to readjust them constantly. He didn't know what they were for, and he didn't care. As soon as she waded out in the water to play with her circles of sticks, he started to look for more bugs to drop on her.

He was chasing around a hopping bug on the jungle floor when he heard the oomans high pitched shriek. Anunnaki curiously headed back to see what she was doing, but stayed hidden in the treeline. The ooman was standing in the middle of the sticks, reaching her hands in the water. When she straightened up, she had a small fish in her hands. The ooman ran onto the beach with her catch, and immediately began to tear into the fish.

Anunnaki was suddenly curious about her stick construction. It obviously wasn't a useless toy as he had first assumed. His cloaking device was waterproof, so he headed out into the bay to examine the trap. The sticks were arranged in a way that let fish enter easily, but then redirected them away from the entrance once inside. Again, he was impressed with the ooman.

As he watched her eat the fish though, his opinion of her diminished again. Parts of the head and most of the guts from the fish could be eaten. However, she only ate the meat from its sides before setting it down. Anunnaki knew it wouldn't be enough. Fish was a lean meat, and she was using too much energy tromping through the jungle and running from yaut hounds.

Infrared vision didn't work very well in water, since fish were cold blooded. When he switched vision modes though, he could see that there weren't any more fish in her trap. It rained enough she could drink water off leaves, but this was the first time he'd seen her eat. Even if she set up traps along every beach, it wasn't going to be enough. By the time she was desperate enough to eat the guts, eyes, and brains, it would be too late.

The ooman came back to check the trap, finding out what he already knew-that it was empty. She paced back and forth in the sand for a while, wasting more energy. But then, she surprised Anunnaki. The ooman grabbed the fish carcass she had dropped, cleaned it off in the ocean, then began to eat more from it.

Anunnaki crept closer, trying not to create ripples in the water. He watched her grimace and gag as she picked off everything she could from the fish. She devoured the meat and fat in its cheeks, swallowed its eyes, tongue, and even its fins. It was a disgusting sight, but Anunnaki was proud of her. There was a slim chance that she wouldn't starve after all.

Ariana felt sort of queasy after that, and still not full. She wiped her mouth and threw the rest of the fish carcass into the trap. She hoped that it would attract small bottom feeders into the trap, then in turn, larger predatory fish. Ariana reached down to wash her hands off then, but her fingers hit something odd. She squinted at the water, trying to see whatever she was feeling.

For whatever reason, Anunnaki didn't back away when the ooman touched him. Her small hands grasped at his calf, then slid up to his muscular thigh. It took the ooman longer than he would have imagined to comprehend what she had her hands on. As soon as her mind caught up to her, she recoiled from him. He snorted with amusement as she panicked and fell backwards into the water.

The salt content burned in her nostrils and down her throat. By the time the ooman recovered and pushed the hair out of her face, Anunnaki had already crossed the beach and entered the jungle. Ariana was still in a panic though, unable to see him, and not knowing if he was still there or not. She plucked one of the sticks from her trap to wave around, making sure the hunter wasn't close by.

After a few minutes, she could finally relax some and get back to work. Since she didn't know what had attracted the hunter that time, she was more paranoid than ever. As she made two more fishing traps from sticks, she kept a keen lookout for any yaut hounds or the hunter. She wouldn't be able to be on guard when she slept though, and it would be dark soon.

While she still had some daylight, she worked on constructing a shelter. Yaut hounds could jump in the air a fair distance, but were too heavy to do any climbing. Ariana found a tree with lower limbs that she could climb. She carried sticks up and laid them across two branches to create a plank.

When she went to lay down, a few of the sticks snapped in half, but otherwise it held her weight. Ariana curled up on the plank, the wood sticks digging into her side. At least she was safe from yaut hounds, but she was constantly flicking insects off her. Some time during the night it began to rain again, making her shiver. If she didn't get sleep, she wasn't going to have the energy to run from yaut hounds.

Chapter 4

She woke up again because of loud piercing animal calls, but at least this time it was finally light out. She slowly shifted upright, feeling more stiff than she'd ever been in her life. It didn't take her long to notice the abnormal growth dangling from her arm. It was about three inches long, and matched her skin color. However, upon closer inspection, she realized that it was more of a leech.

Ariana squealed, disgusted with even the thought of it. She poked and prodded at it and little stumpy legs began to move. It was similar to a blind salamander, but a blood sucker. She tugged on the little thing until it ripped away from her skin, and then she tossed it across the canopy. It left a puffy red circle of bite marks in her skin.

Ariana pouted as she looked over her wound. It was only a small thing, yet it set her off, and her eyes started to water. Everything was trying to eat her. She was covered in bug bites. The hunter, the yaut hounds, insects, and that salamander leech all wanted a piece of her. She needed a proper shelter where ticks, chiggers, spiders, and leeches wouldn't fall from the trees.

She had avoided a section of the island with many rocky outcroppings, since it just looked like too much work to climb. However, since there was less tree cover, she figured that she might find a suitable place to set up camp. There were many overhangs that would block the rain, but weren't quite big enough. If she made a bed under the rock overhang and it rained, the ground would still get wet and that wasn't ideal. She knew she couldn't be too picky, but she continued her search.

She finally came upon a wide oval mouth of a cave. It was big enough that rain water wouldn't reach the back. It was away from any trees and shrubs, which meant less insects. The wide opening wasn't very defensible, but if she could get a fire going, that would keep predators away at night.

Ariana wandered towards the back, starting to plan where to build a bed, when something lept out at her. She immediately fell back and snatched up one of the shattered pieces of rock that had fallen from the ceiling. It was just a tiny yaut hound pup though. It was sorta wrinkly, and didn't have any bone spikes yet. It looked at her with big dark puppy eyes.

The little thing didn't realize how cute it was. The puppy growled and ran at her on clumsy legs. It collided with her shoe, then flopped on its side and proceeded to chew on the leather. A yaut hound pet would definitely give her some advantages. She was in no position to feed and teach puppy though, and worried that its parents were close by.

Yaut hounds were smart, and she didn't need an angry momma hound trailing her. Ariana resisted picking up the spunky puppy, and cautiously left the cave. She didn't get very far. One of the adult yaut hounds were just heading back. Ariana slowly crept down behind a pillar of rocks, begging that she hadn't been seen.

Yaut hounds had an incredible sense of smell though. Before long, the hound came trotting closer, following her trail of scent. Ariana grabbed a rock in her fist and waited for the hound to find her. As soon as it came into view, she bashed the rock into its face.

One strike wouldn't kill such a big hound. She had to keep beating it, or it would recover and chase her. Before she could deal a second blow however, she heard something step behind her. She jerked out of the way just before another Yaut hound pounced. She couldn't fight off two of them.

Ariana scrambled away, heading down the rocks, trying to get back to the trees. She was ambushed by a third hound and skirted to the side, trying to get past it. A fourth hound greeted her, and she had to spin back around and clamor up the rocky outcroppings. She kept changing directions to avoid the hounds and it turned into a maze of pillars, gaps in the rock slabs, and steep cliffs.

Anunnaki glumly sat in a tree, staring at the lizards tunnel openings. A younger, smaller one had appeared over an hour ago, but nothing had happened since. Calling off the hunt after all this time was giving up. Taking a break to return to the home planet would feel like cheating. Anunnaki was desperate for company though, and knew the ooman was his only option.

She was not hard to find. The little female was in more trouble than usual though. Singularly, the yaut hounds hadn't been able to kill her, but now it seemed they had ganged up on her as a pack to take her down. Cloaked, Anunnaki perched himself on top of the highest ledge to watch.

The jagged outcroppings were the yaut hounds main territory, and she was trespassing. One yaut hound paced at the opening of the den, and another laid down on a flat slab of rock in front of the treeline. Three other yaut hounds actively pursued the ooman. They couldn't climb the jagged rock steps as easily as she could, making them slower. The climbing and acrobatics she was using to evade them was steadily wearing her down though.

Ariana leapt over a gap in the rocks, landing hard on one ankle, but she didn't stop. She zigzagged around a few rock pillars, trying to lose the hound right behind her. She continued forward and threw herself up onto one of the overhangs. The hound paced for a moment, then left. Ariana could catch her breath for a minute, but knew it wasn't long before one of the hounds found a way around.

Just as she had thought, a hound began to climb up from the other side. Its nails dug into the rock, and its back legs kicked and struggled to gain traction. She chucked rocks at its head, but it still wasn't deterred. Just when she was about to jump down, another hound came and sat down in front of the ledge. She could either try to jump over the sitting hound, or climb the rock face beside her.

If she jumped, they would just chase her all over again. If she climbed though, there was a chance she could get away. The cliff was higher than the rest of them. Once up there, she could literally hop from one high pillar to the next, and hopefully reach the tree line. The problem was, the cliff face wasn't just straight up and down-it was slanted slightly towards her.

Anunnaki hovered over the edge of the cliff and watched the bold female begin to climb. It wasn't long before the yaut hound made its way up onto the platform, and began to jump at her heels. At one point bits of rock crumbled under her foot, and she almost slipped. The ooman began to pant, and her movements slowed. As she pushed on, her muscles began to twitch from suddenly being overworked.

Intrigued, Anunnaki crouched at the very edge of the cliff, completely unseen to her. She was so close to the top that he could have easily reached down and hauled her up. Anunnaki preferred that she live, but he would not help her. Yautjas valued strength, not weakness. The ooman desperately tried to lift herself just a little higher, and she finally fell.

The yaut hound let out a sharp yelp as she fell on its hindquarters, but it didn't do much to break her fall. The hound quickly whipped around and attacked. The ooman flailed and kicked at the hound, but it caught her foot in its jaws. The female started to scream as loud as her lungs would allow. Drawn by that sound and the smell of blood, two other yaut hounds began climbing up to reach her.

Anunnaki fluidly stood upright, immensely disappointed in the event. She was still screaming as he turned away. Anunnaki jumped down from the clifftop, prepared to continue his hunt. He had underestimated the ooman again though it seemed.

Pain brought on a wave of adrenaline. Ariana jammed her fingers into the hound's eyes, and slipped out of the shoe caught in its teeth. She bolted then, leaving a trail of blood from the hounds to follow. This time, she didn't continue to weave around rocks and she didn't head in the direction of the treeline. There was a cliff right ahead of her, and yet she kept going.

It was at least a two hundred foot drop onto jagged rocks, something an ooman wouldn't survive. Beyond that was sand, and eventually the ocean. Even if she was lucky enough to jump, hit the sand and survive, her injuries would still kill her. Two yaut hounds ran after her and Anunnaki followed, confused by her actions.

When she reached the edge though, she didn't jump. She dropped to the ground and swept her legs over the edge. Ariana carefully lowered herself down then, using some of the vines that hung over. The yaut hounds skidded to a stop at the edge and peered down at her. She reached the ground before her strength gave out again, and it was impossible for the yaut hounds to follow her. Safe but exhausted, she all but collapsed in the sand.

Chapter 5

She was barricaded in by sharp rocks on both sides of the beach, but at least the yaut hounds couldn't reach her. She hobbled into the water, cringing when the salt water entered her fresh cuts. It washed off the blood, and the salt would sanitized the wound. She switched her remaining shoe to the wounded foot, and tightened the laces, trying to keep it protected. She lounged in the sand then, resting.

When she was ready, she swam off the beach, and safely made it back to the tree with the platform she'd built. Her foot was throbbing with pain, and it took everything she had left to haul herself up into the tree. Her shoe was still wet from swimming, so she took it off and hunt it to dry. Her wounds had started to bleed again from the hike to the tree. She didn't know what else to do but but hope it didn't get infected.

She was in enough pain that she couldn't sleep, and all the insects weren't helping. Every time she moved to swat one away, her foot lit up with pain. She was so angry, and so hungry. When an iridescent bug crawled too close to her face, she grabbed it and stuffed it in her mouth. She gagged a few times, but didn't throw it it up.

Ariana ate one insect after another. The island had an abundance of bugs. She convinced herself that she didn't have to move from that spot while her foot healed. When it rained she could drink water from the leaves, and food would come crawling to her.

Without the ooman tromping around, making so much noise, he had better luck with his hunt. He had covered himself in blood to conceal his scent this time. One of the giant lizards came inching out of its hole, flicking its tongue nervously. He had constructed traps that would shut and open tunnel openings as he wished. As soon as the lizard was all the way out, he sealed the tunnels.

The huge monitor lizard whipped around and began trying to dig past the hole cover. Anunnaki stalked closer, until the lizard spotted him. It gave up digging, took off up into the trees, and he swiftly followed. It was too fast and erratic to use his smart disk or spear gun. Throwing mines and plasma bolts hadn't worked in the past. He decided to try a braided leather whip instead.

Besides being able to slice through flesh with ease, the whip could help him swing from trees, and had a longer range than the wristblades. He followed the lizard through the trees, forcing his muscles to work their hardest. The deafening crack of his whip sent every animal in his path fleeing. He put up laser cages, and shot plasma bolts to try and keep the lizard in the vicinity. If he let it get too far, it would find an open tunnel to escape.

He finally got in a lucky shot. The whip wrapped around the belly of the lizard, but didn't cut through it's tough scaly hide. Anunnaki grounded himself on a branch and yanked on the whip, tearing the great big lizard right out of the tree. The weight of the animal pulled him down to the forest floor too though. The lizard recovered from the fall quicker than he did, and it was angry.

As soon as he stood up, the lizard was on him. It slammed him back against a tree. Anunnaki raised his wrist blades towards its belly, but its claws pinned his arm down. Its jaws opened, revealing rows of gleaming white fangs as it struk. His whole head fit between its jaws, and its teeth carved into the tree trunk behind him.

He ducked and slipped out from the lizards hold before it squashed his head, then poised himself for another strike. The lizard realigned its jaws, and stared him down. Instead of striking again though, it turned and ran. Anunnaki went after it, but it slipped into a hole and vanished.

He stood over the tunnel opening, breathing heavily, but not fully disappointed. It had struck at him, and that was progress. If he could seal off more of the tunnel openings once one surfaced, he would have a better chance of taking one down. He had a feeling he would have his trophy soon enough.

Before he constructed more hatches over tunnel openings, his mind wandered to the ooman. He had seen her everyday since she arrived, up until the incident with the pack of yaut hounds. It had been several days since that, and he had not seen her out and about. He had seen her stick fish traps lately. The tides had messed them up, allowing fish to escape. There was always a chance that the ooman was dead.

Anunnaki went to go check, and found her more dead than alive. She was lying on a platform of sticks up in a tree, looking thinner than ever. Her eyes were dull and glazed over, looking dead already. There was excrement and vomit at the base of the tree, indicating that she hadn't left that spot. She was letting herself waste away.

When he moved closer, her eyes followed him, but otherwise she didn't budge. He climbed over to her platform and peered down at her wound. The yaut hounds teeth had done a number on her foot, but the cuts were only slightly red. Infection wasn't keeping her down. She needed to keep working, keep surviving.

The ooman was his only option for any kind of social interaction. Anunnaki looked at her like a plaything, and he wanted her alive. He wouldn't heal her, wouldn't feed her though. He wouldn't even talk to her to aid her, but he sure as hell could pester her until she did what he wanted.

The hunter was looming over her, examining her like he was going to gut her and hang her pelt on a wall, but somehow she didn't care. He already had several animal hides on his back, and he could just add hers to the pile. She wasn't paying all that much attention to him, until he started acting like a monkey. The hunter hung in front of her with one arm, then swung from branch to branch.

Ariana scowled at him. He was acting like a lunatic, and that did not match his fierce look. He wore the iconic metal mask, as well as ankle and forearm guards. Small skulls were pressed into metal scales all in a row that formed his belt. He had smooth black dreads with brown beads of different shapes on them.

He looked like an omen of death to her, yet he started doing pull ups in front of her face. Ariana grew annoyed, feeling like he was gloating about the fact she was going to die. Still, she didn't get up to show him otherwise. Ariana rolled the other way, trying to ignore him. She just wanted to fall asleep and never get up again.

He didn't leave her alone though. The hunter started pulling sticks out from under her, then discarding them. Her platform was starting to thin out. He was playing a giant game of Ker Plunk, waiting to see when she'd fall. When he pulled out another stick, her arm dangled under. When another was pulled, one of her legs fell through the platform.

The fall wouldn't kill her, but she didn't want to be in any more pain. She slowly sat up, her body aching. She slipped back on her one shoe to protect her injured foot, then slowly climbed down. She glanced back up in the tree at the hunter, wanting to stick her tongue out at him. She didn't feel like she even had the energy for that.

Ariana walked on, worried that if a yaut hound found her, she wouldn't be able to run. Maybe that's what the hunter was trying to do, speed up her death. She made it to the beach without trouble though. Ariana was just going to wash her foot in the salt water, but instead just ended up climbing all the way into the water. The rocking waves and cool water felt incredible.

She scrubbed herself down, feeling better by the minute. She dipped her head back, saying her hair, and feeling refreshed. She was still starving though. She headed over to one of her fish traps, and started fixing them. If she had just checked them once a day, she probably would have had a substantial meal.

She began clearing some plant debris that had got caught on the sticks. It felt rubbery in her hands, but she stuck it in her mouth anyway. The salt content tasted horrible. She had to suck on bits of the plant, then spit out the salt before she could even start to eat it. It was chewy, but tasted better than most of the insects she had been eating.

Chapter 6

The ooman was eating everything. She ingested grass, roots, moss, leaves, berries, flowers, and more. Anunnaki found vegetables especially disgusting. What really bothered him though, was that she didn't have a clue what she was stuffing in her mouth. She was avoiding mushrooms, anything with lots of color, thorns, or fuzz-but not everything was obviously poisonous.

Anunnaki caught her digging up something like onions. As soon as she uprooted them, a pungent smell wafted his way, and he knew they were toxic. The ooman didn't have the advanced sense of smell that he did though. She started to wipe dirt off them like she was going to eat them. He grumbled to himself, considering letting her kill herself. Instead, he started pelting her with whatever was nearby.

Insects and twigs started to fall from the trees again, making her flustered. This time however, she spotted the cause. The hunter was poised above her with another critter in his fist. It looked like a miniature opossum.

She could speak his language perfectly, "What the hell is your problem?"

She didn't get an answer. He dropped the squirming rodent and it almost went down her shirt. Ariana screamed and jerked around until she was sure the little animal was long gone. Her stomach was growling, but she jogged away, leaving the food items she had dug up. She wasn't going to fight with a yautja over vegetable bulbs.

Anunnaki huffed and snorted as the arrogant female left. She was oblivious to the fact that he'd just saved her life. He should have just let her die. Anunnaki sat up in the tree alone for a minute, casually picking at his toenails, but then decided to continue following the ooman.

Ariana kept an eye on the trees as she walked. In some way or another, the hunter was constantly harassing her anymore. He was always throwing things at her. One time when she had tried to climb a tree for fruit, he had climbed up ahead of her and snatched them away. Then, when she went around a drop off, he ran and jumped across the gap like he was showing off.

Her traps weren't catching enough fish, so she started sharpening a spear. The hunter had turned hostile whenever she had a weapon before, but she was desperate. Ariana glanced behind her at the jungle, trying to spot the hunter if he was hiding. She didn't see anything, so she trudged into the water. The thin spear had barbs carved in at the end and she hoped getting a fish on the end of it would be easy.

It wasn't. Ariana teetered up on a boulder and jammed the spear into the water repeatedly, but the fish were always faster. Her shoulders and arms were growing tired. Her bare feet hurt.

She tried again and again until she caught something out of the corner of her eye. Ariana turned, and saw the hunter standing right behind her with his combi stick fully extended. Her

heart rammed into overdrive, and she instantly dropped her pathetic spear. The hunter didn't back off this time. His bicep flexed and she cringed, preparing to be skewered.

She heard the combi stick plunge into the water though, and slowly peeked open her eyes. His spear was stuck in the sand and sticking out above the water some. The hunter waded through the salt water and pulled the combi stick out. There was a large red and yellow fish flopping on the end of it.

Ariana went from fearful of him to pissed off again. He just had to show her up on everything. There was no way she could throw the spear that far, nevertheless actually hit a fish. She climbed down off her rock to retrieve her little spear from the water. Feeling resentful, she didn't look at the Yautja as he walked towards the beach with his kill.

She went back to work, and ignored the yautja. After a while, she figured out how to get fish to come closer to her. Her toes stirred up the sand, and bits of debris went floating around in a cloud. Fish swam closer to eat the little floating particles, and so she had a better shot at spearing one.

She stayed perfectly still so that her shadow didn't scare them. This time she didn't strike at the first opportunity either. She waited until a fish was in the perfect spot, and then she plunged the spear into the water as fast as she could. All of the fish scattered, and at first, she thought she had missed. She was ecstatic to realize that she'd actually got one.

Ariana proudly turned around and held her spear up in the air to show the hunter. He wasn't on the beach anymore. She scanned the trees, but she didn't see him there either. She slowly lowered the spear, and then carelessly ripped the fish off the end. The hunter always got to gloat, but when she finally caught a fish, he was gone of course.

Ariana finally felt that she was getting the hang of things though. She had washed her foot in salt water as often as she could. The redness had vanished after that. They were nothing but scars with a few small scabs where the deepest cuts were still healing. Besides that, she had tied branches together and weaved grass in for a roof over her when she slept in the tree. She put soft material over her stick planks as well, to improve her bed.

However, even though she had gained some progress, she was still prey. Ariana carefully trekked through the forest, thinking that she was keeping a good lookout. As soon as she stepped beside a large tree though, she spotted a large animal, and froze. It was similar to a boar, but without eyes and it had protruding bottom jaw. It was rutting around in the fallen leaves, so she cautiously began to back away.

The boar looked up before she got very far. Ariana tilted her thin fishing spear down at it, but as soon as it charged, she ran. Ariana did circles to confuse it, then attempted to climb a tree. She was not a very graceful climber, and she quickly ended up on her ass in the mud. The boar came charging, and she flung herself out of the way.

Anunnaki could smell the oomans' fear, her adrenaline, and knew she was in trouble before he even saw her. He perched up in a tree as always to observe. It wasn't a yaut hound giving her trouble this time, but an overly-aggressive boar. It charged at her relentlessly, and her attempts to climb grew weaker. She was heaving in and out breaths as the boar charged again, and just barely moved in time. The boar clipped the tree she was hiding behind, then turned and stormed right back at her.

The ooman tried to scramble away, but her foot caught on a thick tangle of vines and she fell to her ass. Her spear was already broken. It hadn't managed to pierce the boar's tough hide. She hurried to yank her foot free, but the vines only tightened around her.

Anunnaki swiftly extended his combi stick, and plunged it down from the tree. It hit the boar at an angle through its lungs. The animal immediately dropped and slid in the mud, stopping just inches from her toes. It was a clean kill. Anunnaki jumped down to claim his prey.

Ariana was in shock. She sat there and watched the yautja confidently walk up to the large dead boar. His muscles tightened as he ripped the combi stick from its body. He collapsed the weapon, then brought out another. He used a small knife to make cuts along its belly, and its limbs. He was starting to dress the kill, and she was still sitting there on her ass.

The yautja didn't pay her any attention as she reached forward and untangled her foot from the vines. His smooth dreds hung over his face as he made cuts. He worked incredibly fast, and was already rolling the guts out of the boar by the time she stood up. She watched him, entranced by how his clawed hand manipulated the blade so easily. He applied pressure on either side of the boar's pelvic bone then and snapped it in half, rather than bother cutting it.

The sound of it made her stomach churn uncomfortably, but she didn't give into the urge to leave. Instead, she shuffled forward, "You saved me."

The yautja paused his movements but didn't look up at her, "No."

"Thank you."

His metal mask finally tilted up, and the eyes glowed yellow, "I did not save you. I was merely hungry, and you were good bait."

"I don't believe that."

He moved so fast, she didn't have time to react. The hunter stood to his full height in front of her, his mask downcast on her. Blood flung off the blade and dotted her face as he poised the knife at the base of her throat. She held her breath, but didn't try to get away. He could have killed her at anytime since she'd been dumped there; he'd had plenty of opportunities. She didn't think he was going to kill her now.

His voice was a growl, "If you insult me again, I'll rip your throat out!"

It took her a minute to realize that, though teasingly, she had called him a liar. He slowly took his blade away, then crouched down to continue dressing his kill. It wasn't long before he was finished. The yautja slung the body over his shoulder, and began to carry it away. Ariana just stood there, feeling disappointed in a way.

Chapter 7

He fed more strips of boar meat into his mouth, then continued pacing. The ooman really was ignorant. Yautjas didn't protect frail oomans, they hunted them. He had killed the boar without much thought. However, the fact of the matter was that he was out of meat, and the boar was food.

He hadn't saved her pathetic life, he was just hungry like he'd said. Keeping her alive for his amusement, and heroically saving her were two totally different things. Her presence when he killed the boar meant nothing. Anunnaki shoved a handful of meat into his mouth, more agitated about the oomans' presence than ever.

Ariana wandered around the jungle listlessly, finding food where she could. She didn't need a Yautjas' protection anyway. So far, she had always managed to escape. She would have evaded the boar too, one way or another. She never wanted to see that hunter again.

She came upon a canyon in the middle of the jungle, distracting her from her thoughts. It looked like a cave had collapsed. Some vines hung over the edge, but they were a long way down from touching the bottom. The sound of running water brought her closer to its crumbling edge. Ariana grabbed a hold of a thick vine and leaned out, trying to find the source.

The canyon had a rocky lip, but she was sure there was a stream under it somewhere. She shuffled around the edge, looking for a way down. Ariana lowered herself down with vines, and reached the cave wall. It was slick and smooth, giving her no way to climb it. She hoisted herself back up over the ledge of the canyon to try a different spot.

She should have just given up. Her next spot had a steep mud bank. She grabbed a hold of vines and plants, but the mud was so soft, the roots pulled right out. She quickly slid down the mud and tumbled onto the ground. She stood up, brushed herself off, and then stared up at the top. Getting up was going to be harder than getting down.

For now, she didn't worry about climbing back up. Down in the canyon, she could see that the cave still continued underground. One end didn't go on for long. It was barricaded with fallen boulders, but a stream flowed from the ceiling and pooled underneath. She caught some of the water in her palms and drank it. It was fresh water, not salt.

She drank more until she was sick, and then continued exploring. The ground was covered in soft moss rather than dead leaf litter. On the opposite side of the stream was the rest of the cave. She curiously walked over there, but it was too dark for her to comfortably go explore. The fresh water in the canyon and the shade away from bugs was bliss, but Ariana started trying to find a way back up.

She had known getting back to the top would be difficult, but she had underestimated just how difficult. Grey clouds were steadily rolling in, and she wanted to get to her tree before the downpour. Every vine she grabbed snapped. There was a skid mark through the soft mud where she'd come down. Twenty feet down suddenly felt like a hundred feet.

The sky began to crack with lightening, and the rain started. The downpours didn't last long, but she ran for cover. The other side with the stream wasn't back far enough to be shelter from the rain. She headed into the dark cave instead, but jerked to a stop right in the entrance. If she had taken one more step, she would have had the metal tip of a combi stick imbedded in her stomach region.

She slowly glanced up at the yautja hovering in the shadows. His muscles were strung tight and his grip on the combi stick didn't waver. Her first thought when faced with Yautjas was to back down. She wasn't wasn't even close to being in their league. Ariana was sick of being pushed around though.

If he wasn't protecting her from some beastie inside, then he was just hogging the cave for himself. Her heart was thundering in her chest, but she sidestepped and tried to squeeze past him. He growled and held the combi stick horizontal to block her. She quickly ducked underneath it, but his boot hit her stomach and shoved her back out. He loudly tapped the end of the combi stick on the rock, claiming his space. She wasn't done yet though.

Anunnaki enjoyed the females antics, but he wasn't about to let her in his home. She slowly inched her way into his cave, but he blocked her with his body. She tried to dive between his feet then, but he quickly clamped his legs shut, trapping her. He let her struggle and wheeze for a minute, before grabbing her and shoving her back out into the rain.

She eventually stopped trying to get past him, and stood there with her arms crossed in front of her. Her short black hair clung to her face, and her clothes were so tattered they hardly covered her anymore. Something in him wanted to protect her, wanted to help her. Maybe it was because she was female. Maybe it was because she was smaller, like a child.

Her blue eyes looked up at him and all she said was, "Please."

His resolve was weakening-and that made him angry, "Fuck off ooman!"

He conked her on the top of the head with the pole of his combi stick to reinforce what he'd said. She looked saddened only for about a millisecond, and then she just looked pissed off. He saw in her eyes what he saw in every female's: the potential for revenge. She backed up a few feet, then sat in front of him. He could have forced her away, but instead, he saw it as a challenge.

Anunnaki squared himself just inside the entrance, and out of the rain. If she thought that she could out wait him, she was wrong. He only slept half as much, and didn't eat nearly as often as she did. Lightning lit up the sky in bright bursts, and booming thunder shook the ground. He watched the ooman begin to shiver from the cold, and then eventually she got up and left.

She could hardly see in front of her eyes, the rain was coming down so hard. The side of the canyon under a rock lip provided a little more shelter but water still pooled at her feet. She leaned her back against the smooth rock wall and watched the lightning. She knew it couldn't rain this hard for long. Then, she could work on climbing out of the canyon and getting far away from that awful yautja.

He wouldn't be tricked. Anunnaki stayed at the entrance of his cave for some time after she had left, to make sure she wasn't coming back. The heavy rain made it more difficult for him, but he could still make out her shape along the wall of the canyon. He didn't understand why

she wouldn't just leave already; her tree wasn't that far away. He eventually slunk back into his cave, but kept his combi stick close in case the ooman got any stupid ideas.

Unlike earthworms, his giant lizards never surfaced when it rained. So, as soon as the clouds dissipated and the downpour stopped, Anunnaki got ready for another hunt. He suited up, and grabbed his gear. He stepped out of the cave and was suddenly reminded of the ooman. She was still there; he could smell her urine somewhere in the grass.

He wouldn't leave his cave to be raided by the filthy ooman, but he didn't want to miss a hunting opportunity either. If the ooman wouldn't leave on her own, he would make her leave. He quickly spotted her by the remains of a mudslide where a section of the cave wall had crumbled. His hands tightened into fists as he stomped towards her.

His temper quickly cooled and his steps slowed as he saw what the female was doing though. The mud wall was slanted, but still steep. She gave it a running start, but still couldn't reach the vines dangling over the edge. He stood back and watched her shove sticks into the mud bank then, and try to use them like steps. The mud was too soft, especially after the rain, and they couldn't hold her weight.

The ooman washed the mud off her body under the stream, then faced the wall beside it. She began to climb, but she was too short to reach the next cracks and footholds. When she tried to jump, the rock was too slick and her fingers were too weak. A rock ledge overhung most of the canyon, making climbing more difficult anyway. The ooman wasn't sticking around to annoy him; she just couldn't get out of the canyon by herself.

Chapter 8

Pitty was a weak emotion that Yautjas tended to suppress. Yautjas were not moved by the suffering of others weaker than them. Yautjas as a race concurred, killed, and didn't regret. Seeing the ooman work so hard to do something he could accomplish so easily though, was pitiful.

Every attempt to climb out left her with a new scrape or bruise, but she wasn't giving up, and that was honorable in his eyes. She began to rip out all the tall grass, and weave the strands together like rope. When she was finished, it was weak, and only five feet long. She had a rock tied at the end for an anchor. She begged it would work.

She dug her feet into the mud bank and got as high as she could before slipping. Then, she flung the rope up, trying to get it caught in the vines, or in a crack in the rock lip. It took her forever to get it stuck. Then, when she put her weight on the rope, the rock anchor at the end popped off and she went falling. She fixed another rock at the end of the rope, and tried all over again.

Anunnaki was finished watching the ooman. He ran at a section of rock wall beside her, then jumped. The strong claws on his hands and feet provided excellent grip, and he climbed up the rest of the way, easily hoisting himself over the overhanging ledge at the top.

There he was, showing off again. Ariana grit her teeth and glared up at him. The yautja hardly gave her a glance before he turned his back to her and walked away. She wouldn't let him get to her. She didn't need him. Ariana climbed the wall as high as she could, then continued throwing her rope up.

Cloaked, Anunnaki returned to the edge of the canyon a moment later. After he had left her, her efforts hadn't diminished. Her face was red with frustration and her eyes were starting to water, but she kept trying. When the end of her rope landed on the ground close to him, he moved to step on it.

The rock finally caught on something, and this time then rope held her weight. She struggled to climb after all the work she'd already done. Every inch closer to the top gave her renewed hope though. She kicked her legs and heaved herself over the lip. As she caught her breath, she stared at the end of her rope. She had expected it to be caught on a vine or a rock, but it was just laying in the grass.

She was puzzled about what the rope could have been caught on. She didn't think about it for long though. Her hunger was the priority. Ariana headed for her fishing traps, daydreaming about finding a beached whale in the sand. She was that starved.

Yaut hounds were just as active at night, and she couldn't see at night. Once it was dark, she stayed up in her tree. She couldn't sleep. Ariana reached out to try and catch the fireflies when they got close. She wasn't sure if they were edible, so she let them crawl in her hand and then she let them go.

Now that she knew where the yautja stayed, she couldn't stop thinking about it. He was a complete bastard, but that canyon had a lot to offer. She would always have fresh water. Yaut hounds wouldn't be able to reach her. It was away from trees, and thus away from most of the insects. The cave would always be dry, and a fire wouldn't go out... She wanted in that cave.

Anunnaki strolled out his home with absolutely nothing on, intending to take a quick shower in the morning. He came to halt though, immediately noticing the oomans presence. There were several long vines braided together that hung down to the ground of the canyon now, so that she could get up and down. He watched her climb down with a bundle of sticks, then add them to the shelter she was constructing.

He had assumed that once he helped her up out of the canyon that she would go back to her tree fort. Instead, she was trying to take over his space. He was there first. It was his canyon, and he didn't want to share. Anunnaki stomped over to her little fort, and kicked it down.

She'd seen unclothed Yautjas before. Yautjas were proud of their physique and could walk around naked without it being sexual. She'd never seen him undressed before though, and it was a bit of a surprise. She wobbled backwards as he came closer, but he didn't reach for her. Instead, he kicked down her lean to shelter, and then stomped it into the ground.

"Leave ooman!"

Her eyes snapped from his chest, up to his eyes. She had to have been on the island for a couple months now, but she'd never seen him without his mask on. He had very light tan eyes with red around the center. His dreds were black, and it really made his eyes stand out more. She hadn't moved or responded to him yet, and so he began to growl.

Ariana held her ground, "I'm not leaving."

She watched his bicep tighten, and his hand balled into a fist as though he was going to hit her. She turned her head away, which was a submissive gesture, but she didn't leave like she was told. When his muscles relaxed, she thought he was backing off. Instead, he grabbed her and threw her over his shoulder.

Anunnaki climbed the nearest wall, and dumped her at the top. Then, he yanked down her braided vines. She tried not to act affected. Ariana gathered big leaves, and sticks then dumped them into the canyon. She braided grass and young tree bark into thin cord. Then, she anchored a thick vine around a tree trunk and lowered herself back down.

She could hear his disgruntled growls from the other side of the canyon. She started to make her shelter again, and he came and destroyed it like last time. She lounged around until he went inside the cave, and then she started building again. A few minutes later, she heard him step behind her, but she acted like he wasn't there.

His deep voice hit her ears, "Back up."

It was such a strange command, she turned to look at him. He was fully dressed, wearing his bio mask, armor, and everything. He held a small gun in his hand. She suddenly understood his command. Ariana sprang up and got out of the way right before he fired. A blue light shot out and blew her stick shelter to bits.

"You are not welcome here ooman."

She swallowed hard, "I'm not leaving."

"This is your last warning ooman. You must go."

"No."

This time he did hit her, and she didn't see it coming. She was on her hands and knees before the pain came flooding in. The whole side of her face ached. She whined as she stretched opened her jaw, the pain becoming sharper. Though it hurt, she had to remind herself that he had the power to hit her and break her jaw bone. For whatever reason, he hadn't punched her that hard.

The ooman didn't look at him as she picked herself off the ground. He stepped around her, trying to see if her face was bruised, but she shrank away from him. He had intended it as a warning only. He didn't mean to send her to the ground. Either way, it had the effect he wanted-She climbed up the sturdy vine and disappeared up over the edge of the canyon.

Ariana stayed away for a while, searching for food, but then ended back at the canyon. She laid down on her stomach and peered down into the canyon. She didn't spot the yautja anywhere outside. Ariana found a pebble and threw it at his cave to see if he'd come out. When he didn't, she assumed he wasn't home.

She knew it was bound to get her in trouble, but she climbed down anyway. There was still no sign of the Yautja, so she started to walk in his cave. It was completely black for a while, and she had to guide herself with a hand held up in front so she didn't run into anything. When she got far enough though, motion detecting lights flickered on and bathed the cave in a green glow.

She was in awe of the high ceilings and cave formations. There were holes in the floor near the back, and she could see water rushing underneath as though there were tunnels under the room. On one side, there was a crawl space near the ceiling where the cave probably continued. In the middle of the floor was a gigantic animal skin rug. The head of the animal was as big as an elephant's. There was a nest of pelts near the entrance. On one wall, all his gear and weapons were hung up.

What interested her the most though, was the food. He wasn't living like a savage when it came to dinner time. He had cups, plates, and eating utensils. He had shelves of spices, seasonings, and sauces. There was a cold storage unit filled with fruits and berries. In pouches, she found dried jerky.

Chapter 9

She ate until her belly felt distended and close to bursting. The more she moved, the more she felt she might throw up. Ariana slowly crawled into his bed, and sank into the soft furs. She didn't regret a thing. If the Yautja busted in there and killed her, she'd die happy as hell...

Ariana woke up from a long nap, and saw nothing but pitch black. Her heart started to race. The lights had gone out. She didn't know how long she'd been asleep. She didn't know if the Yautja was in the room with her, waiting to pounce.

She scrambled out of his bed, trying to feel for a wall, but then the green lights suddenly began to glow again. She had forgot they were on motion sensors. Ariana swiveled her head around the cave, searching for the hunter. Thankfully, she was alone.

Her racing heart began to slow, but her sense of fear didn't just vanish. She'd eaten most of his food, and there was no going back from that. She was dead already, but her eyes wandered to his weapon wall. If he was going to come after her, she could at least be prepared and fight back.

If eating his food didn't prompt him to actually kill her though, taking one of his weapons surely would. She decided against a weapon, but paced around the room, trying to figure out what she should do. She could wait and apologize. She could check her traps and bring him more food. Maybe hiding somewhere for a while would let his temper cool down.

Ariana stared at his huge fur rug, knowing that anywhere she hid, he would find her. She wasn't dealing with a novice hunter. There were other trophies around the room besides the rug. None of the skulls were small. Maybe that was why he hadn't killed her yet-many yautjas saw humans as unworthy prey.

She crouched down in front of one of the massive skulls. Four human skulls could be stacked inside one of its eye sockets. It was that big. Ariana stood and brushed her palm over the bony crest on the top of its head. She liked the skulls. They reminded her of the day of the dead festivals back home.

Anunnaki jumped down into the canyon, and headed straight for the stream. The oomans scent was still present, and stronger than it should have been though. He changed directions and walked towards his cave instead, scenting the air as he went. The oomans scent led him into the cave. Even after he struck her, she dared to enter his home. The ooman was asking for death.

He was not shocked to find that his food had been raided. All of the smoked meat was gone, as well as some fruit. His seasoning jars had been tampered with. He reached out and grabbed the one without a lid, and brought it closer. There was an unfamiliar scent to it. It did not take him long to figure out that she had repeatedly licked her fingers and dipped them in the jar.

Her scent led him to his bed then, and both his hands clenched into fists. The thieving little rat had rolled in his bed. Her scent was all over it. He'd have to wash every single pelt to get

her stink off of them.

He tensely moved to his wall of weapons next, hoping that she had taken one. To disappointment, all of his weapons were in tact. She hadn't touched even one. Still, trespassing and stealing food was a good enough reason for him to go after her. If striking her didn't teach her a lesson, then he had to increase his intensity until she did learn.

He started to leave the cave, but then came across something else she had touched. The oomans scent clung to his large trophy skulls. A dark growl bubbled up from his chest as he examined them for imperfections. There wasn't a single chip or scratch. She hadn't damaged them; instead, it seemed as though she had caressed them.

His sense of smell was limited, so he switched his vision mode to get a better sense of what she'd done. The bio mask highlighted the oils that were left from her hands. She had stroked each and every one of them. His mask showed that she had traced her hand around each bony brow, then down the snout of one. On another skull, it showed that she had brushed her hand along it's jaw.

He hadn't had a female admire his kills since he came to the island, and that had been many cycles ago. She was not a fertile yautja female trying to get his attention. However, he still felt the same measure of pride knowing that the ooman admired his trophies. It had taken him a considerable amount of time to collect so many massive skulls.

His anger deflated. He couldn't let the little female get away with what she'd done though. He didn't need an ooman sneaking in when he was away to steal his bed and his food. Anunnaki left the cave, and began to track her down. He didn't want to punish her, didn't want to hurt her. All he wished to do was scare her.

She looked down at the bobbing water, trying to see a reflection. From what she could tell, the side of her face wasn't black and blue. She was surprised, since it still felt sore when she touched it. Ariana straightened up, trying not to think about what he'd do to her, but she couldn't relax. Waiting for him to make an appearance was killing her nerves.

He didn't make her wait much longer. As soon as she started to walk back towards the tree line, she spotted a pair of glowing yellow eyes. It was the hunter. He was standing up on a branch, partially hidden behind the leaves, with his mask tipped down at her. She steeled her nerves, and stood perfectly still, waiting for him to make a move.

He cocked his head and a soft clicking noise escaped him. It gave her the chills. The noise could mean a number of things depending on the circumstances, but it was usually made when hunting. It was meant to let her know she was prey; it was meant to scare her.

He climbed down from the tree like it was a jungle gym, swinging from vines and then jumping on top of the massive roots at the bottom-showing off again. He strolled forward, his mask still deadset on her. She was ready for a beating. She was ready for pain. She wasn't prepared for what he did next though.

The hunter reached down and unclasped the smartdisc from his thigh. It was a lethal weapon. It was capable of cutting through bone. It wouldn't just mame her, it would kill her. Even if he threw it from a distance and it didn't manage to cut a limb completely off, she would bleed out in a matter of minutes.

Ariana went white with terror, and her heart began to thunder in her ears. She still held her ground, trying not to panic. His pace slowed at he got close to her, making faint clicking sounds in her ear. Even though she fought to remain calm, her adrenaline kicked in, and she reacted.

The ooman had remained still, as though she was not afraid. His senses here more advanced than hers though, and he could tell she was afraid. His very presence made her heart race. Anunnaki wanted her to submit to his touch before she fainted, and then he would leave.

His lifted his hand, but before he could touch her, she lashed out. The ooman went right for his hair, like any viscous female. He was used to protecting his dreds though, and sharply jerked back before she grabbed them. The ooman wasn't deterred. She went for his groin next.

He enjoyed the oomans spunk. She harshly kneed him in the groin, but with the metal guard, he did not feel much. He stood there, letting her wear herself out. She kicked and punched him. Though she was thin and weak, he could tell that she used to have some muscle and power to her.

The ooman wore out quickly. She was not thriving in the jungle, only barely surviving. The ooman had given it her all, and had left him without a scratch. She was wheezing, trying to catch her breath. Anunnaki reached out to touch her hair, expecting her to submit once her energy was drained. Instead, she turned and bit his fingers like a piranha.

He clicked and tilted his head, surprised they she had so much fight. He didn't take his hand back though. Yautjas were dominant, and ruled over weaker species. He tightly grabbed her shoulder, applying more pressure until she dropped to her knees in front of him.

At a glance, she looked calm and submissive. However, he wasn't fooled. The oomans fingers slowly curled around a rock, as though she would still attack him. He didn't want to break her fight, as he enjoyed it too much. Anunnaki walked away, confident that she wouldn't enter his cave ever again.

Chapter 10

She felt so drained, weaker than she'd ever been in her life. But when the Yautja started to walk away, like she wasn't worth his time, her blood boiled. Her fingers tightened around the rock in her palm. Ariana knew better, but she chucked the rock at his back anyway.

It bounced off him, not causing any harm. It sure as hell made him angry though. He whipped around and charged at her. She wasn't nearly as fast as he was. She tried to run away, but he caught her around the waist. Ariana panicked, and struggled to get out of his grip, but his arms were like steel bars.

Anunnaki forced the ooman to the ground, asserting his dominance over her. He liked the interaction, like the challenge. He only wished that the female was healthier—stronger. That would make the game more fun. When she was finally out of breath and stopped squirming, he released her. She glared at him as she picked herself up, but this time, she was the one that turned and left.

Every single day, when he wasn't stalking a monitor lizard, Anunnaki committed his time to feeding the ooman. He couldn't let her know that he was providing for her though, or that would ruin his reputation. Instead, he cloaked himself and followed her around the jungle. When she headed towards the beach, Anunnaki went ahead of her. He shot out a net, collected fish, and then put them in her traps.

As she wandered the jungle Anunnaki collected fruit and nuts. When she wasn't looking, he placed items in front of her path. If she missed some food, he jumped back down from the trees, collected what she hadn't seen. Then, he'd discretely sprinkled it back in the direction she was headed. If she started going the wrong direction, he played recorded noises from his bio mask. Any sort of large animal noises, scratching, howling, or hissing sent her sprinting the other way. Insects were a primary food source for her, so cicada noises and other chirping lured her closer.

The ooman remained alert as she peeled open a fruit. She was always prepared to run or climb a tree in case there was danger. Anunnaki saw the yaut hound ahead before the animal even spotted the ooman. Anunnaki couldn't just fatten her up. He would let her be chased, to build her stamina.

The hound perked up when it saw the ooman, then rushed towards her. As soon as the ooman heard the animal's footsteps, she bolted without even looking up to see what it was. Without training, hounds were lazy and uncoordinated. Still, Anunnaki kept up with them to make sure it didn't get too close to her. It was steadily gaining on her. She jumped for a tangle of vines and hauled herself up into a branch.

The hound scratched at the trunk of the tree for a minute, then began to pace back and forth. The ooman stretched out on the branch, ready to wait a while. The hound didn't stay interested for very long though. It snuffled the ground, heading in Anunnaki's direction next.

He thought that all the yaut hounds on the island knew better than to bother him. The hound couldn't see him, but followed his scent without fail. The hound crept closer, and growled low in its throat. Anunnaki wouldn't stand for it. He kicked the animal in the leg, hard enough that it quickly went limping away. Lesson on learned.

Ariana cocked her head as she watched the hound limp away. She cautiously climbed down, and tried to figure out what had harmed the animal. She picked up a moss-covered rock and walked around the large tree, expecting to see another animal or something sharp it could have stepped on. There was nothing but empty air.

Anunnaki didn't back away, waiting for her to run into him or notice his camouflage. She curiously inched closer. He could feel her body heat, and see her steady pulse through a vein. He slowly inhaled her unique scent. Since he had been feeding her, she smelled better, healthier he supposed.

She was about to turn away when she caught a glimpse of a cloaking device. The empty space moved suspiciously, like heat waves. Yautjas were capable of remaining perfectly still for long periods. If he moved, it was because he wanted her to see him. She swung at the air, aiming up high.

She hit something hard, like armor or his mask, and his cloaking device dropped away. There was a small scratch across the eye lense of his mask now. Ariana stepped back, a sense of dread flooding in on her. His hand shot out and wrapped around her throat, preventing her from trying to run. She tried prying at his fingers before kicking him in the ribs.

Anunnaki released her neck and let her run, just so he could chase her down. She was easy prey, but his body responded the same. Running gave him an endorphin high, and pinning her down exhilarated him. He caught up to her easily, grabbed her arm, and jerked her to the ground. She thrashed, kicked, and clawed at him.

Anunnaki let himself get carried away. He forced her arm behind her back too harshly, and she let out a loud yelp. He instantaneously dropped his hold on her, not wanting to do more harm. He had to be more careful not to break his toy. The ooman clamored to her feet, rubbing her shoulder, but otherwise seemed ok.

He switched his vision mode, learning that she had simply pulled a muscle. He did not think much of it. The injury would be sore for a while, but heal easily. Anunnaki's chest pulsed with a growl, and the ooman took off running again. This time he didn't chase her, but simply cloaked himself and continued stalking her.

The injury bothered her more than he thought it would have. She could hardly climb, and she didn't like to move her arm much at all. Instead of looking for food, she went back to her tree platform and went to sleep. At first, he thought the ooman was being dramatic. But her shoulder was beginning to swell, and he knew then that he'd hurt her more than he had thought.

Since it wasn't likely that she'd go very far to search for food, Anunnaki brought food to her. She made gross faces when she swallowed beetles, but grasshoppers didn't seem to disturb her as much. So he collected mostly grasshoppers, assuming they were her favorite. Then he removed a spider from a nearby web, and stuck as many bugs in the web as it would hold. She could easily pluck the stuck insects off and eat them.

Incase that wasn't enough, he uprooted vegetables, and then planted them at the base of her tree. He placed dead leaves over the disturbed dirt so that she wouldn't know they had just been planted there. She was starting to recognize certain plant leaves, and would know what was under the soil.

It was safe to drink water out of the pitcher plants, and he had seen her do it often. She didn't even open her eyes as Anunnaki jumped around in the branches above her. He added a medicinal tonic to all of the pitcher plants up in her tree. It would ease the swelling and her pain as well.

When he was done, Anunnaki climbed closer to the sleeping female. He could tell there were some improvements. The ooman was cleaner. Since she didn't have to constantly look for food, she had more time to bathe and untangle her hair. She had sewn a few holes in her clothes with plant fibres as well.

She was still thin though. Her body was covered in bug bites, bruises, and small cuts. As she shifted in her sleep, he noticed a slight rash on her leg. The ooman was just a plaything to him, and the rash wouldn't impede her at all. However, he was already thinking about what he could put on it to make it fade.

Her growling stomach woke her up. She dreaded even just having to climb down from the tree. She knew the hunter was just toying with her, picking on her because he could. She sat up, and it felt like her shoulder was on fire. Before climbing down, she drank whatever water she could from the leaves, and any pitcher plants that didn't have partially digested bugs in them.

She climbed down then, prepared to have to walk all the way to the beach for food. Instead, she stared down at the ground in shock. In the few hours that she'd been out, about a dozen new plants had sprouted around the tree trunk. The ground was unusually soft as she pulled them out. Most of them were similar to beets, and a few were like sweet potatoes.

Before she was done eating them, she noticed another oddity. There was a spider web between the trees raised roots, packed with bugs. It looked like a mosaic of insects. Ariana moved closer, and poked one of the bugs to make sure it wasn't dead. The whole web began to vibrate. It was a stupid thing to get excited over, but Ariana couldn't stop grinning.

Chapter 11

As soon as her shoulder was better, the ooman was back to getting into trouble. Anunnaki followed close behind, checking the lizard tunnel openings for recent activity as he went. He had a hunch as to where she was headed, but couldn't believe she'd dare to go back. This ooman just didn't learn.

She shuffled to the edge of the small canyon, and peered down. The ooman must have assumed he wasn't home. She unwrapped a length of rope from her hip that she had been using as a belt. She proceeded to tie the rope around a thick vine. As soon as she started to climb down, Anunnaki intervened.

He grabbed the end of her rope, snapping it away from the vine. Then he hauled the rope up, dangling her over the canyon. She shrieked and reached towards the edge. The mud wall was soft enough. He dropped the rope. The ooman rolled down the steep mud wall then smacked the rock bottom.

Anunnaki jumped down and landed with a loud thud. Then he flung his arms out, threw back his head, and let out a bellowing roar. The ooman frantically scooted away, her eyes going impossibly wide. He enjoyed her fear, enjoyed seeing her awe of him.

He also liked her stubbornness and bravery. As soon as she stood up, he charged, but she didn't run away. He stopped inches from her, and let out a growl. She didn't budge. Anunnaki harshly shoved her shoulder, initiating a challenge.

Her hands curled into fists, "Bite me."

That was good enough for him. He tackled her to the ground, being careful not to injure her again. Instead of getting her in a headlock, or restraining her arms behind her back, this time he straddled her. He pinned her arms above her head, then leaned down and bit her shoulder. The ooman let out a squeal and it amused him.

Anunnaki rolled off of her, then pointed above the canyon, "Out!"

She quickly hopped up and retrieved her length of rope from the ground. He waited to make sure she left, and then he climbed out himself. The ooman would be alright on her own for a while. He was hungry and so he decided to go hunting. As he stalked a huge male boar though, he got an idea that involved the little ooman.

For whatever her reasons, the ooman was adamant about taking over his space. He wouldn't mind her hanging around the canyon, seeing as was the only freshwater source on the island. However, even with him feeding her now, he didn't trust her not to go in his cave and steal his food. He could tolerate her in the canyon, but he didn't want her in his cave. Anunnaki knew how to test her.

He killed the boar and hauled it back to the canyon. Anunnaki skewered the boar on a spit, and roasted it over a fire. He brined it with a saltwater solution to help tenderize the meat, and

keep it juicy. Throughout the hours, as he turned it, he basted it frequently with a herb mixture.

The tantalizing smell lured the yaut hounds closer, as the ooman female. As it cooked, she stayed up in a tree near the canyon. Yaut hounds paced around the canyons edge, whining and drooling. When it was finished, he put out the fire and left while it cooled. He didn't go far, wanting to see if she would steal some.

As soon as the yaut hounds were far enough away, Ariana lept down from the tree and climbed into the canyon. Her mouth was watering, and her stomach was growling. He had rotisseries an entire pig. There was plenty for him and her both to eat. Hell, there was enough meat on the boar that the feral yaut hounds could have some too.

As she walked closer though, she expected the hunter to jump out and get her. She couldn't believe that he'd just leave it unguarded. Ariana glanced around, then snuck closer. It smelled amazing. She inched forward, still expecting the yautja to come chase her off.

She stared at it for a while. It looked so delicious. However, she didn't want to cause any more trouble with the hunter. He harassed her enough as it was. Stealing more of his food wasn't going to convince him to let her stay in the canyon. She didn't want to steal his food.

Ariana did decide to steal something else though. There were no flames, but the coals under the pig were still smoking. She found a stick, and dug through the ashes. She blew on the dying embers and managed to catch a handful of dry grass on fire. She just about did a little dance she was so proud of herself.

Funji and mushrooms seemed to burn slow, so she shish-kabobed some onto a stick and caught them on fire. She climbed out and headed back to her tree. She quickly built a fire pit and a small lean to shelter to keep the rain off it. Now she could cook her own food, and sanitize water. She wouldn't have to worry about yaut hounds anymore-they had a healthy fear of fire.

She quickly learned that maintaining a fire was difficult though. She had to build it up before she left, without burning down the whole jungle. Her little fire pit shelter was anything but watertight. It was difficult to carry fire with her for protection from the hounds. Then at night, she was prepared to feed it more wood, but fell asleep instead.

She sprang awake when something hit her face. She wiped a warm goo off her face, then flicked the broken eggshell off her wood planks. There was another broken egg on her side. Ariana squinted in the dark, but the Yautja wasn't hard to see. He hung above her, with another egg in his hand.

Her eyes felt heavy, and she laid her head back on her arm. It was cold out and lightly sprinkling though, and her brain suddenly remembered the fire. Ariana clamored down and tried to revive the flames. She stirred up the ashes, trying to get oxygen to the embers. She put more grass and twigs on it, but everything was too wet. She gently blew on the embers, but they died out anyway.

When she climbed back up onto her plank, the Yautja was gone. She wanted to blame him, and assume he had put her fire out, but she really didn't believe that. If anything, it almost seemed like he'd woke her just in time to revive the fire. That really didn't make sense to her either though. Why would the hunter try to aid her?

Whether he had tried to help or not, she decided they she'd go back to the canyon in the morning. Maybe if she could suck up to him, he'd start another fire for her. And maybe if she apologized for stealing his food, he'd stop attacking her... She figured it was worth a shot at least.

Ariana trekked all the way to the canyon early in the morning, but the Yautja wasn't there. She knew very well that he got more aggressive when she got near his den, but she wandered into the cave anyway. She had brought along a little peace offering, and she didn't want ants getting to it outside. She set the leave platter of food safely in his cave, then left. As soon as she hauled herself to the top of the canyon, the Yautja uncloaked.

She stared at his sandals as she clung to the rocky edge of the canyon, knowing already that he was upset. She glanced up at his mask, "I'm sorry."

"No, your not sorry. Not yet."

Anunnaki knew he was being too soft on her if she still felt free to trespass in his cave. He wouldnt punish her for going in the canyon, but venturing in his cave was a step too far. He jammed his foot into her chest, and shoved her off the ledge of the canyon. She wasn't over the mudslide this time, and it was a straight drop down to the bottom. Ten feet really wasn't that high up, but she let out a yelp as she landed hard on one ankle.

He had to stop being so gentle with her. Anunnaki jumped down, grabbed her around the throat, then slammed her to the ground. She cringed and reached to the back of her head, her fingertips coming back with blood on them. Even if she didn't steal any boar meat, she still had no business in his cave. He had to make sure he got the point across.

"If you step inside my home again, I'll make sure you don't ever come back out."

The ooman still did not submit, didn't even respond to his threat. Instead, she started to whine and kick at him. Her nails dug into his arm, and she struggled to free herself. Anunnaki let her go, and she didn't hesitate to climb out of the canyon.

Anunnaki didn't make threats lightly. He strived to ensure that his every word was a promise. It was seen as unhonorable to lie or exaggerate. If the female entered his cave again, there would have to be consequences.

Chapter 12

He went inside his cave to see what all the ooman had tampered with. He expected to find her scent all over his belongings, but she hadn't touched anything this time. Instead, she had left something behind. Anunnaki crouched down and untied the bundle of leaves. It was fish.

The ooman had brought him food, and it wasn't just laying on the bare rock. She'd taken the time to weave a plate and then wrap it up in leaves. It wasn't whole fish either. She'd cut and prepared it for him, leaving only the biggest fillets.

He had harmed her, when she had brought him a present... Anunnaki didn't understand. It didn't smell poisoned. He could easily provide for himself. He didn't need an ooman bringing him food-he was the one keeping her alive. Her actions confused him.

Before he could think about it too much, he heard noises coming from outside. He slipped out of the cave to see that it was the ooman climbing down. He'd just beaten her, and she came back. Nothing she did made sense to him. Anunnaki's wrist blades shot out, and he advanced in case she tried to enter the cave again.

"Can you show me how to start a fire?"

He stopped in his tracks and cocked his head.

When he didn't say anything, she spoke up again, "Wasps have been trying to take over the tree I sleep in. Can I build a shelter in the canyon?"

Anunnaki glanced up at the sky, at the darkening clouds. The tides were raising and the storms were getting worse. She probably wouldn't have enough time to build a shelter before it rained. And even if she did, if she didn't make it properly, the storm would likely ruin it.

He didn't mind her in the canyon anymore, but without a proper shelter, the canyon was not a suitable place during a storm, "No."

"Please! I brought you food."

He understood the oomans ploy now. She wanted to trade food for canyon space. Since she was being submissive and asking him to stay, he gave in, "Fine." Before the storm hit, he wanted to get in one more hunt though, and warned the female again, "The cave is mine."

Ariana watched the yautja leave. He made it look so easy to climb out of the canyon. He jumped up to the rocky ledge like a basketball player, then simply hauled himself up. The first thing she did was make a rope with knots so getting in and out wasn't so difficult. She was quickly getting sick of braiding. It was boring, and it took too long.

She collected sticks, grass, leaves, and other materials and lowered them down into the small canyon. She made another lean to shelter since it was easiest. Grass on top of rock wasn't the softest bed, but she felt lucky that she finished right before it started raining. The Yautja wasn't so lucky, it seemed. As the rain started to beat down harder, she just caught a glimpse of him limping into the cave.

Ariana sat up on her elbows, trying to see where he was injured, but he disappeared inside too fast. A bit of glowing green blood left behind was quickly washed away by the rain. Ariana leaned her head down on her arms, but kept her eyes on the cave entrance. She slightly concerned about his well being. He was an ass, but she didn't want to be all alone on the island.

The overhanging of rock she was tucked under wasn't big enough. The rain never dropped straight down, but went sideways with the wind. Most of the water drained into the pool under the waterfall, or else she'd worry about the canyon flooding. Her bed was quickly soaked with water, but she was used to that. As the wind picked up, bits of leaves tore off her shelter, and more rain dripped on her. It was cold, but she was used to that as well.

The sky began to crack with lightning, and branches bent with the wind. Ariana curled into a tight ball under her shelter. Vines broke loose and leaves went flying. The storm grew fiercer. When her shelter blew apart and tree branches started to break, Ariana ran for the cave.

Only after she was already inside, did she remember his threat. She tiptoed down the hallway towards the gallery room, hoping he wouldn't be too angry. The storm was quickly shaping up to be a hurricane. He couldn't have expected her to stay outside in that.

She leaned into the room, expecting him to be standing close by with a weapon in hand. Instead, he was acting very uncharacteristically. The yautja was casually dressed in a loincloth, and lounging in bed. As his eyes met hers, he didn't get up to chase her away. He didn't even growl.

Ariana stepped closer, noticing his wound then. There was a foot long gash down his thigh. It looked charred, as though he'd cauterized it. Looking at it made her sick.

He had issued a very serious threat, and yet the ooman still entered his cave. Her clothes were soaked, and she was dripping wet. Anunnaki watched her wedge herself in a corner, then start to wring her hair out. He wasn't in the mood to chase her off.

One of the lizards had dived into a tunnel, and he grabbed its tail. The animal had doubled back and attacked. Anunnaki still ever landed a single blow. Its long slender body was quick and agile. One of its claws sliced open his leg, and it was over.

As soon as he faltered, the monitor lizard ran and slithered back in its hole. For the first time, he was doubting his abilities. He'd tried for several cycles, had sustained numerous injuries, but hadn't managed to harm even one of them. If one ever did stay and fight, it might just be his last hunt. He would join Cetanu.

As soon as things quieted outside, Ariana hopped up to go to see what it looked like out there. The yautja beat her to the hallway though. He didn't move slow or limp as he came to blocking her path. She shrank away, surprised that he could even walk with an injury like that. It didn't seem to impede him at all, and she was impressed.

"I said if you entered, you'd never leave. You are my prisoner now."

Ariana rocked back on her heels, feeling dizzy all of the sudden, "Huh?"

When he'd threatened her before, he'd meant that he would kill her before she got out of the cave. His injury made him rethink that though. His leg pained him more than she could

know, but he would not show an ounce of weakness. Still, it was going to be nice having someone to order around while he healed, “You will stay here, and do what I say.”

Her temper flared. She didn’t have a problem with hard work, but she couldn’t stand to be ordered around, “Fuck you.”

He took a step forward, “Mmm, it would be a pleasure. I haven’t had a good fuck in a long time.”

“Disgusting!” Ariana turned her head away, her cheeks suddenly turning red.

The yautja grumbled to himself before pointing to a row of various tools in the back, “Grab a broom, and sweep out the cave.”

“No.”

“Submit!”

“No.”

He closed the gap between them, his eyes intense. His mandibles splayed and he could have easily plucked out one of her eyes with them. If he roared, that close, she’d likely go deaf forever. Her heart was frantically beating inside her chest, but she didn’t back away.

“You will starve then, until you obey!”

Ariana’s eyes shifted to the side, looking at where he kept his stores of food. She wanted to run over there and start stuffing her cheeks right in front of him. Right away, the yautja seemed to know what she was thinking. He slowly backed away from her, and lifted his arm out, gesturing to the food.

“Go ahead and try ooman, and I’ll break your bones.”

She didn’t budge. He went to the refrigeration unit then, and pulled out a chunk of leftover boar meat. Just to torture her, he heated it up, and the scent quickly filled the whole room. He walked back over to her, and began to eat it inches from her face. It made her stomach gurgle.

The fish was the closest thing she had to a decent meal. Raw tasteless vegetables and crunchy insects were her staple, and they made her nauseous. She hadn’t had cooked, seasoned meat in so long. Ariana just broke down. Her eyes began to water, and she turned away before he saw.

Anunnaki stood there watching the female for a moment. He’d upset her, that much he could tell. She went to the back of the cave where there was the least amount of light, and she sat down with her back to him. He let out a huff of air; it wasn’t his damn fault. She was the one acting up. If she would have done what he asked, he would have fed her.

He finished off the piece of meat, then stood there indecisively. He drew in deep breaths, smelling the air to try and determine her current emotion. He could always tell how yautja females were feeling, and if they were on edge, he made sure to clear the room. The oomans hormones were vastly different though, and he wasn’t sure what to think.

She heard him step behind her, and quickly wiped her eyes, “Go away.”

He grunted and nudged her leg. She waited for him to give her another command. No matter what, she wouldn't do it. He nudged her again, harder this time. She tensed as the yautja reached around her, but all he did was set a cup down in front of her. He'd said that he'd let her starve, however, he hadn't said anything about letting her dehydrate.

Chapter 13

The cup warmed her fingers as she lifted it to her lips. It was a sort of unsweetened tea. Ariana greedily drank it down. She turned around then to watch the yautja plop down into the bed. He didn't even open his eyes as she got up, and set the empty cup back on the shelf. She suddenly felt bad for not helping him when he had that nasty gash in his leg.

Though he kept his eyes closed, he wouldn't dare fall asleep with the ooman in his cave. He listened intently, interpreting her movements. If she moved towards the exit, he was prepared to leap up. She moved towards the back, and she heard her messing with the tools in the corner. He had a hammer on the wall, and was sure she'd attempt to bash his head in.

His body stilled, waiting for her to approach his bed. He was more than ready to pounce. Instead, he heard a light brushing sound. That was the last noise he expected to hear. Anunnaki popped his head up, and saw that she was sweeping the floor.

"Good girl." He cooed.

Ariana's shoulders started to raise, "I'm not doing this for you! The cave is filthy. If I'm going to be staying here, it needs some improvement."

Anunnaki let out an indignant snort, and laid his head back down. He was in no mood to argue with her. When she was done sweeping, he gave her a second task: polish his weapons, armor, and tools. She refused, and his chest pulsed with a deep growl. Before he could get up and force her to do as he said, she started organizing things on the shelves and tidying up.

When she was finished with that, he tried another command, "There is a leak in the wall that needs to be patched. Get in my toolbox and the repair gel."

The ooman completely ignored him, and started dusting his trophy skulls instead.

"Don't you damage those."

She suddenly gave up dusting and started to rearrange his furniture instead. There wasn't much but a chair, the animal rug, and a few tables. She was intentionally avoiding commands, and it was pissing him off. He started to shift out of bed, but pain fired up in his leg again. He couldn't let her get him so worked up. Either way, she was doing his chores for him.

After a while, it got more difficult to move his leg. It wasn't because of pain. His whole leg just felt weak, and a pins-and-needle sensation had begun, suggesting that there was nerve damage. He considered getting up for more medication, but worried that if the ooman saw him limp, she would take advantage of his weakness.

He attempted to give her one more command, "Ooman, see that bag of supplies over there? Retrieve it for me."

Ariana looked where he was pointing and zeroed in on a black leather duffle bag, "Say please, and I'll get it for you."

"You are my prisoner! You are in no position to negotiate! Bring me that bag, right now!"

Ariana got up, walked over, and yanked one of the pelts out from his bed, "Make me."

She spread the fur down on the hard floor, and sat down to continue picking the plant burs from her clothes. She waited for him to explode and pummel her. Instead, he stiffly hefted himself off the bed, went to the bag, and angrily started throwing things out of it. She watched him inject his leg with something, and then he quickly settled back in his bed. He was breathing heavier, like he was in a great deal of pain.

Ariana went over and started neatly putting the things back in the bag. It looked like a lot of medical equipment, so she asked, "What was that shot?"

"Antibiotic shot, now shut up and let me rest."

Just because of the fact that he had told her to be quiet, she spoke up again, "I have to pee."

He let out an annoyed groan, but saw an opportunity. If she wasn't going to be helpful, there was no point in keeping her in the cave. He hadn't wanted her in his cave until he was injured and thought she'd be useful anyway. The storm was over, so she could go back to making shelter in the canyon somewhere. Until his leg was healed, he wouldn't feel like continuously tackling her for no good reason except that it was fun. If he allowed the female outside the cave, she'd likely take off-and that's just what he wanted. It would give him an excuse to come after her later when his leg was fixed.

"Ooman, you have ten minutes to go to the bathroom. If you run, just know that I'll come find you later."

He watched the ooman leave, thankful that he would finally rid of her. She was too much work to deal with at the moment. He listened to her footsteps outside, and they slowly grew more faint. When he thought she was gone, he tried to get some rest.

It wasn't long before his eyes snapped open, and the female came waltzing back in with armfuls of damp straw. As she started putting a bed together right next to his, Anunnaki angrily stared her down. She hardly looked over at him. When she tried to take more furs from his bed, he snatched them away with a low growl. He couldn't believe her!

He held back a growl, "I figured you wouldn't come back."

The corners of her lips lifted slightly, "Yea, I would have except it's dark out now and I'm sure my bed up in the tree was destroyed by the storm."

His injury made him a bit more passive, "Fine, but move your bed further away from me."

"No I don't want anything to creep in here while I'm asleep and get me. Nothing will mess with you, so I'm staying close."

He chuffed, "I'll let it eat you."

Her brows pulled together, but she didn't comment. She pushed all the straw together, and formed it into a nice little oval bed beside his. As soon as she put the pelt down that she had stolen earlier, he grabbed it and slid it under his head. She tried to grab a different at his legs, but he kicked her away with his good leg.

She let out a loud sigh. She needed to get on his good side, “Can I get you anything Big Guy?”

He grumbled and turned away from her, so she took that as a no. Ariana made herself comfortable, and as soon as she stopped moving so much, the lights went out. Even though the bed still wasn’t very comfortable, she didn’t have as much trouble falling asleep this time. Just knowing there was someone close by put her at ease. She listened to his steady breaths and was quickly out.

Anunnaki closed his eyes, but found it difficult to fall asleep right away. He was a solitary hunter. No one was supposed to be in his personal space. He could feel her body heat only a few feet away from him. The unfamiliar scent from her presence in the cave kept his muscles tense.

Just like she had feared, something came wandering into the cave. At first, she thought it was the yautja touching her. When she got ready hit him though, she felt it again, and knew it wasn’t him. She jerked her legs up, and heard the animals nails scratching the floor as it hobbled off. As soon as she stood up, the lights came back on.

Though he couldn’t smell any danger, Anunnaki peeked his eyes open to see what she was fussing about. It was some sort of armadillo looking critter. It wasn’t dangerous, and wasn’t smart enough to get into his food storage. Usually he chased animals out simply because he didn’t want them defecating in the cave. With his injury though, Anunnaki planned on leaving it be.

“Aren’t you going to get rid of it?”

He let out a loud exhale, and then got out of bed. He figured that if he didn’t deal with it now, the female wasn’t going to let him sleep. He corralled it towards the exit, and it wobbled back outside. When he turned back, he saw that the ooman was sitting on his bed.

“Ooman...” He warned.

“I have a name you know.”

Anunnaki plopped down on the big bed beside her, and the female still didn’t move. He almost didn’t care. Anunnaki laid his head down and tried to fall back asleep. Having someone so close to him unnerved him though. He wasn’t used to anyone being around. And in the back of his head, he was paranoid that she planned to attack him when he slept.

Anunnaki flipped over and shoved the female back onto her bed, despite her protests. There was no logical reason for her to want to be near him. Yaut hounds knew their chances of climbing out of the canyon were slim, and so they never entered. All of the small animals that entered the cave were just scavengers, and wouldn’t do any real harm. He didn’t like her so close to him.

“Goodnight...”

His response was an incoherent grumble.

Chapter 14

One of the first things Anunnaki noticed in the morning was that he had an erection. It created a large tent in his loincloth. It was the first time that had happened since he was a horny unblooded hunter. He grudgingly assumed it was triggered because of the oomans scent. Annunaki wasn't really concerned about it-until the female started to wake up.

Despite the pain in his leg, he swiftly got up and walked out, heading towards the small waterfall at the other end of the canyon. He stripped off his loincloth, and submerged himself into the cold pool of water. His erection quickly subsided, and he could get back to more important things. With his body partially supported by the buoyancy of water, his leg didn't hurt as much when he moved it. He was doing some physical therapy repetitions when the ooman came outside.

When he was finished with his exercises, he was at a loss as to what to do next. Even with his injury, Anunnaki wasn't going to spend the day in bed. Nevertheless, was in no condition to hunt down great big monitor lizards either. He had plenty of leftover boar meat, and fruit stored. He already had purified water stocked in the cave. Besides the leak in the wall, his chores were pretty much finished.

The ooman was his only company and source of entertainment, and Anunnaki was suddenly grateful that she had stuck around. He tied his loincloth back on, and went to go see what the ooman was up to. He discreetly leaned over shoulder. She appeared to be trying to start a fire, and was doing it improperly.

He retrieved better tinder, and a better chunk of wood to work on. Then he chuffed, trying to get her attention. The ooman continued spinning the stick between her palms. He set the new supplies next to her, but she still didn't pay attention to him. Anunnaki didn't like to be ignored. He found a beetle and plopped it into her hair.

The ooman jumped up and did a funny dance to get rid of the bug before finally turning to him, "What do you want?"

He pointed to her sticks, "You're doing it wrong."

She let out a heavy breath, "Ok."

Anunnaki put his hand on her arm and shoved her out of his way. He sat down, put some dry tinder at one end of the chunk of wood, then used her stick to rub a line back and forth. Ariana watched him, thinking to learn from him. Instead, her eyes found themselves glued to his biceps. His movements never slowed; he was like a machine.

He quickly produced a flame, and moved it over to the fire pit that was already there from when he cooked the boar. Ariana just nodded, impressed. When he started to add more wood to the fire, Ariana went ahead and left. She went to the beach, strung the fish together, and improved a few if the traps. When she returned, the yautja was sitting by the fire.

As soon as she skewered a fish to cook it, he spoke up, "I wouldn't do that."

“Why not?”

“Heat will destroy some of the proteins. You’ll get more nutrition eating it raw. Don’t be worried about parasites, you already have them.”

She looked down at the fish with a frown, then back at him, “I have parasites?”

“That’s what I said. My bio mask was able to see them immediately, but they’re not harmful. One species will simply breed in your intestines, lay eggs to be passed with your stool, then die. The tapeworm though, will take a small portion of your nutrients, and will continue to grow inside you.”

“What the hell? And that’s not what you consider harmful?”

Anunnaki cocked his head, “No, not really.”

“Ugh, that is so gross! Is there any way to get them out?”

“Yes, I have broad spectrum anthelmintic pills that would easily rid you of parasites.”

“Can I have one?”

He straightened up, “Why would I waste my resources on you? You let one fire go out already, and if you eat another raw fish, you will just get more parasites.”

Ariana nodded, and started to prepare all the fish. She cooked them anyway. She figured that she didn’t need any more parasites. Plus, lately she had been able to find enough food to be able to save some for later-so even if it did kill some of the protein, that was fine with her. While she ate, the yautja stood up and went back in the cave.

She was shocked when he came back and tossed her the anti parasite pill. He also handed her a small tube of something and pointed to her leg, “Put it on your rash.”

She happily swallowed the pill, and applied the cream to her rash. Then she moved to sit right next to him, “Thank you.”

Anunnaki let out a low rumble, and inched away from her.

“So, what’s your name?”

He didn’t turn his head towards her, but his eyes shifted to the side and he grunted, “Anunnaki.”

“I’m Ariana.”

He didn’t say anything back; he just stood up and left. Ariana prodded at the fire for a moment, and rolled a few more logs in before getting up too. Though she was full at the moment, she decided to go look for food to eat later. Now that she was staying in the cave, she would be able to safely store fruits and veggies in his refrigeration unit. She could try her luck with hunting too, since she had a fire going.

Anunnaki tried to find things to do while the ooman was away, but just ended up sitting around, keeping the fire alive. He watched the ooman come and go, enthusiastically adding food to the storage units. She would grab a quick drink from the waterfall every trip back,

then head right back off into the jungle. She hardly seemed to need his help finding food anymore.

He suddenly leapt up when he heard a noise, and his heart started to pound. Pain shot down his leg from the sharp movement, but he focused his full attention to the jungle. He heard it again, heard the ooman scream. Anunnaki didn't budge. She was close to the canyon, and there was a good chance she'd make it back.

His leg wasn't healed. It would be reckless to go after her. He was on the island to hunt, not to be fussing over an ooman. He could hear snarling and an animal's jaws snapping closed. She'd taken on several feral yaut hounds before and made it out alive. He convinced himself she'd make it to the canyon before anything happened.

He should have never given the female his name. He heard her shout, "Anunnaki!"

Her palms began to sweat as she grasped the animals long bone spines. It had her back pinned to a tree, and the animal's jaws pressed closer, trying to snag her leg. She pushed back with all her strength, but she couldn't shove the bulky hound back. Several bone spines were beginning to press against her body with enough pressure to leave bruises. Soon they'd begin to puncture her skin. She'd yelled the yautjas name, but as the seconds ticked by, it was hard for her to believe he'd actually show up.

The hound's nails dug into the dirt, trying to force his jaws closer. Just when she thought her arms were going to give out, her eyes locked onto the yautja. Even though he had a foot long cauterized gash down his leg, he came running at the hound. He kicked it on the side of its hindquarters with his good leg, spinning the hound around, and releasing her. Ariana went running to the hunter.

His focus was on the hound when he felt the oomans hands on him. He liked the way she grasped his muscular arm, looking to him for protection. The hound dropped its head low and crept closer. The ooman rested one hand on his back as she moved to huddle behind him. The little ooman was easy to impress, but it made him feel powerful.

Anunnaki almost roared at the hound, but remembered the oomans sensitive hearing. He let out a savage growl instead, and the yaut hound hesitantly turned away. The oomans soft hands dropped away from him then. Anunnaki twisted around to checked her for injuries. It didn't look like she had anything but bruises.

Ariana was in a slight daze as she ogled him. He didn't even have to fight off the hound, just his mere presence seemed to scare it away. It took her a moment to realize he was looking down at her, and she was probably making the stupidest face. He probably thought she had brain trauma. Ariana bashfully turned away.

She headed away from the canyon, still hoping to find more food. She thought he'd go back to the cave. Instead, she could hear him walking behind her. She glanced back at him, slightly worried about his injury. If it pained him, he didn't show it, and she enjoyed having a guardian following her around.

Chapter 15

He'd saved her life, and that seemed to have had an uncontrollable effect on her brain. Ariana walked in front of him, scanning the jungle for food. A few times, she turned around, pretending to look behind her for anything she might have missed. Really, she was just trying to peek back at the yautja. She liked seeing him so cladly dressed, without the usual armor, mask, and weapons.

She found it difficult to focus on finding food. She couldn't think about him, couldn't stop looking back at him. When she glanced back again and their eyes met this time, her stomach did summersaults, and she knew she was in trouble. She had a crush on a yautja.

He suddenly stopped and grunted, gaining her attention. Her first thought was that maybe he needed to rest his leg, but instead, he was pointing to the ground. She recognized the plant leaves immediately. It wasn't good for her to be distracted. She was wasting energy wandering around if she wasn't keeping a sharp lookout for food.

She dug up the plant, but then he grabbed it out of her hands. She watched him use his sharp nails to cut away a small portion of the bulb with the leaves attached. Then, he replanted it. Ariana usually just dug it up and discarded the leaves, but his method made more sense. If more plants didn't grow back, she would slowly be depleting her food source.

She marched on, keeping her mind focused on finding food, and not the yautja. Since she wasn't paying attention to him anymore though, it came as a surprise when he suddenly came up behind her. There was no warning before he roughly grabbed her and forced her to the ground. He straddled her, and placed his arms beside her shoulders, caging her body under him. She didn't fight him.

She enjoyed being overpowered. She was ready to be taken, but quickly realized that was not his intention. He covered her mouth with his hand, and his eyes searched the jungle floor. She knew he had excellent hearing, and figured a yaut hound was nearby. Since she was just tapped there under him though, she figured she might as well enjoy it some.

She took the opportunity to touch his toned chest, and his muscular arms. She tried to be subtle about it, but Anunnaki still noticed that he was being touched. She gently slid her palm down his chest, towards his abs. She distracted him for a moment, and he tipped his head down to give the ooman a questioning look.

It occurred to him that the ooman wasn't struggling. Every time he'd tackled her to the ground before, she had fought him. Now, when he was weaker because of his injury and at a disadvantage, she didn't even squirm. Anunnaki didn't understand it. He was sure he hadn't allowed her to hit her head when he pinned her down.

He was torn from his thoughts as he heard the sound again. Something was moving underground, and he knew it could only be one animal. A few feet away, he saw a long pink tongue extend from a hole, scenting the air. He thought the lizard would smell him and slink

back in the hole, but it didn't. Long claws grasped the edge of the dirt and the monitor lizard slowly crawled out.

Ariana had noticed the large holes scattered around the jungle floor. She had tripped over them a few times, but had never seen anything come out of them. She was horrified as she watched the huge camouflaged lizard. Anunnaki could tell the ooman was beginning to panic. He steeled his muscles as she began to move, thinking she would try to slip out from under him. Instead, she looped her arms around his body and hugged herself to him.

He had no weapons on him, but it was still an opportunity for him to observe the lizard's behavior. He mentally noted the wind direction, temperature, and time of day. Watching it would help him hunt it down later on, but the ooman's scent clouded his focus. She smelled as strong as a newly blooming flower, or a ripe fruit. His body responded to her scent, and her touch.

He could feel his loins swelling with desire so he jumped off of her, and the lizard swiftly disappeared. His body wanted her, but he wouldn't force the ooman as a mate like he'd heard of others doing. He didn't believe oomans were as willing as their males said they were. Under enough pressure, an ooman would give in. Or in this case, left without any other options, an ooman would pair with a yautja.

He presumed that if there were other oomans on the island, she wouldn't want anything to do with him. If there were yautja females on the island, he was certain his body wouldn't be interested in the ooman. On top of that, mating interests would only distract himself from his goal: claiming a lizard skull. Because of all that, he strictly decided not to pursue the ooman.

He continued to follow the female around the island, but now it was difficult not to stare at her. He liked to think that he had a great deal of self control. His libido was proving him wrong. Instead of staring at her ass the whole time, he tried to focus on the jungle.

When she stumbled over a tangle of roots though, his focus switched back to her. Her dark hair was short and glossy. She had very sweet light blue eyes. He watched her inspect her foot after she'd stumbled, and he suddenly smelled a hint of blood. He stormed forward and grabbed her foot to inspect it.

Ariana hobbled on one foot and held a tree for balance as she tried to swat him away. If he could run to her rescue with the nasty injury on his leg, she wasn't going to complain about pain. "I'm fine. Let go!"

Something sharp had punctured through her skin. It was a small wound, but deep, and infections were always a concern in the jungle. He grabbed her around her tiny waist, and threw her over his shoulder like he was hauling in a kill. He immediately rethought the decision, considering the pain in his leg. When the female shoved at him and wiggled though, he held her securely. She wasn't going anywhere.

As he started to walk off with her, Ariana couldn't help but start giggling, "What are you doing? I can still walk! You're going to hurt yourself."

To her surprise, he started jogging. It seemed as though he had no physical limit-nothing was too much, nothing could wear him out. He was showing off again of course, but this time she liked it. They reached the canyon quickly, and he set her down so she could climb on her own. She immediately started building up the fire, and Anunnaki slipped inside the cave.

The ooman was still underweight, but his leg was starting to burn with pain. He went straight for his medical bag, and an anti-inflammatory as well as more antibiotics. Then he grabbed a pot, added water, meat, her vegetables, and carried it out. He hung it on the rotisserie equipment to cook, then went back inside to start making her a pair of shoes.

The food was done before he was though, so he hid the project, and went out to join the ooman. He only brought one bowl. He poured himself a large portion, making sure not to get any plant parts. Even cooked and seasoned, he despised vegetables. Then, he sat down and started to eat in front of her.

She watched as he quickly finished off one bowl and poured another. It smelled so good, and he was going to eat all of it. It didn't seem like he intended to share at all. Ariana slowly scooted closer to him until their knees touched. He growled and poured himself another serving.

"That's not fair! I helped find some of the food, so I should get some!"

Anunnaki intended to feed her, but not before he played with her first. He wiped his mouth, set down his bowl, and then he pounced. She screamed in surprise as he slammed her back to the ground. A low growl vibrated from his chest, making her heart race. There was a small amount of fear that he was seriously guarding his food, but really she believed he simply enjoyed taking her down. She liked it too, and played along.

Fighting to free herself, she head butted him and immediately regretted it. Pain shot through her forehead, "Oww..."

He immediately sat up, dragging her up with him, and cocked his head.

She rubbed at her forehead, "You have a very hard head Big Guy..."

He chuffed in amusement, then went and retrieved another bowl so she could eat what was left in the pot. Besides the vegetables, he'd intentionally left a few pieces of boar meat in there for her too. With his injury, and needed more sleep than usual. So as she ate, he got ready for bed.

Chapter 16

With his injury, his body needed more rest than usual. So after the ooman finished eating, he got things ready for bed. He cleaned the pot, all the utensils, and cups. He fluffed the mattress stuffed with soft plant material. Then he tediously organized the fur pelts on top, only for the ooman to plop down on them as soon as he turned his back.

His mandibles tensely splayed to the side and he let out a deep growl. The ooman looked at him with a guilty face, but didn't move. Since Intimidation tactics were no longer useful on her, Anunnaki didn't hesitate to grab her arm and haul her off his bed. He grunted and kicked at her pile of straw, indicating where she was to sleep.

He tried to stay firm with her. When she attempted to walk around him, he blocked her. When she tried to steal one of his pelts, a game of tug-o-war was started. He won of course, and placed the pelt back where it belonged. She tried to slowly inch her way onto his bed, so he lifted her up and unceremoniously dumped her on the pile of straw.

Ariana grabbed a handful of the dry, itchy, grass and chucked it at him, "I will not sleep on straw anymore! I'm tired, and you will share that bed!"

His chest pulsed with a low rumble as strands of dead grass floated down on him. As he stepped close, towering over her, she didn't even blink. In a lot of ways he enjoyed her boldness. She was bossy like a true female should be. It was in his nature to follow a dominant females orders. Though it didn't usually extend to other species females, Anunnaki caved nevertheless.

"You may sleep on the bed, but you will bathe first."

Hearing those words, she wanted to jump around with excitement. She ran out to the other side of the canyon, and tossed her clothes onto a nearby boulder. The water was freezing cold, but she emerged herself in the small pool of water under the waterfall. The yautja came walking over a minute later with soap and a towel. She had known staying in his cave was a good idea all along-he had all the good stuff she'd been living without.

One thing he didn't like about oomans was their capacity to sweat. He handed her the bottle of soap, then began to inspect her clothes. She only had one outfit, and been sweating in it all day long. He sprayed her garments with a disinfecting spray then waited for her to finish bathing. She was taking her time, and he was impatient.

She nervously held her breath as he stepped into the water with her. He grabbed the container of soap, and began to quickly rub her down. At first she liked his hands on her, though she was slightly disappointed that he stayed within G-rated areas. But then, he started to fuss with her like she was child. He covered her eyes and poured more soap on her head. He checked behind her ears and sniffed at her, as though she couldn't properly clean herself, and she grew annoyed.

She finally shoved him away, "Go wash your balls or something, I don't need your help!"

Anunnaki didn't like her tone, so he splashed water in her face. As she coughed and spit up water, he climbed out of the pool. He paced back and forth until she was done. He tossed her the large towel, but she was still taking too long. Ariana was almost annoyed when he started to wring out her hair, but he was being surprisingly gentle about it.

When he noticed the female was watching him, he realized that he was being too intimate with her. He didn't want to form an unhealthy attachment to her. When he finally won his skull trophy, he would leave the island. The ooman would be abandoned again. He dropped his hands away from her hair, and tossed her clean clothes at her. As he headed back to the cave, he could hear her bare feet padding behind him.

The nights always got cold, but the air inside the cave was even worse, and now her hair was damp. Her arms were quickly covered with goosebumps. Ariana wrapped herself in the furs on his bed, trying to regain some of her heat. The yautja wasn't having it though. He rolled her to the edge of the bed and straightened the furs back the way he'd had them.

She tried to fold another pelt over herself, "I'm cold."

"You're messing up my bed."

"Fine then... Goodnight." She tucked her legs up against her chest, trying to retain more warmth.

He laid down on the other end of the bed with his back to her.

"Hey, I said goodnight. You're supposed to say it back."

Anunnaki merely grumbled at her.

She stared at his muscular back, at his grey and green mottled skin, and at his scars. Since he was being rude anyway and hadn't said goodnight to her, she didn't mind pestering him a little. Ariana put her finger on his small "X" shaped scar. He growled loudly, like a revving engine and she quickly jerked her hand away. She touched another scar a moment later, and he let out a deep breath, practically hissing at her.

She anxiously bit her lip and wiggled her toes, but she couldn't resist. She reached out and traced a jagged scar on the back of his arm. This time he growled like a deadly alligator and slunk away from her. She couldn't help but grin, and scooted closer to him.

Through the night, he felt her touching him in one way or another. Her hand would brush his back, or her leg would touch his. Anunnaki was sure she was doing it on purpose, just to agitate him. When he felt her arm press against his back, he'd had enough. He'd given her plenty of warnings.

He twisted around, intent on hitting her, until he saw that she was asleep. She wasn't faking it either. Her pulse was different, and her eyes moved under her lids. As he started to think about what she could have been dreaming of, the ooman inched closer to him, trying to snuggle up against his side. She had said she was cold, but Anunnaki was disgusted with the idea of cuddling.

He shoved to the edge of the bed. As soon as her elbow touched the cold cave floor though, she started to squirm back towards the center of the bed. He hesitated, but then

shoved her over again. When it seemed like she was going to stay put, he laid on his back and tried to fall back asleep. With a matter of minutes, her arm moved to rest against his.

He was too tired to bother moving her anymore. After about an hour though, he felt her shifting again. He laid there stiffly as she snuggled up to his side. It wasn't exactly uncomfortable-she was soft and warmer than he was. As much as he didn't like it, she was slowly breaking down his walls.

In the morning, Anunnaki woke up with her holding onto his arm like it was a pillow. He was able to slip out of her grip without disturbing her, and immediately continued working on his project. With his mask's scanner, he could accurately make shoes to fit her exact size. His bio mask helped guide his cuts.

His resources were limited, but he sewed scraps of leather into a pair of shoes. He added a double sole so that nothing would puncture through. He turned the whole thing inside out when he was done, which would hide the stitching and inhibit moisture from leaking in as well. They were nothing fancy, but he set them beside the bed for her to find. With them being so small, she would immediately know that they were hers.

He didn't intend on sticking around until she woke up. He had more important things to do. Even if he couldn't hunt, he could still build hatches over the lizards tunnel openings. They would keep the animal above ground where he could hunt it. As he dressed though, he found himself staring at the ooman.

He noted the long scars on her arms. He'd seen them before, but hadn't taken the time to notice they were from his species. At some point, a yautja had been rough enough with her to slice their nails down the length of her forearms. Yautjas could do great damage to oomans, even accidentally, and by the look of her scars she had to have learned that lesson. Even though he was dangerous, she had still insisted on sleeping next to him.

His eyes moved from her scars, to her pink tinted cheeks. For a species that looked so childlike, she had fared the jungle better than he'd expected. As a male, his gaze naturally shifted to her breasts and hips next. Even so thin, he had a feeling she could withstand a rough mating and childbirth as well. Anunnaki was so distracted by that thought, he almost put his boot on the wrong foot.

Chapter 17

She slept in for as long as she could, keeping her eyes shut even once she was awake. For once, her back didn't hurt from sleeping on rock or up in a tree. She hadn't felt this good since she'd been dumped on the island. Ariana yawned and pretended to stretch just so she could feel for the yautja. To her disappointment, she couldn't feel him.

Ariana sat up, finding that she was in the middle of the bed, and by herself in the cave. She stood up, almost missing the pair of shoes beside the bed. They looked her size. And unlike most yautja footwear, they would cover up her whole foot-there would be no stubbing her toes, or getting dirt in her shoes. She beamed down at them, knowing that he had to have made them for her.

She slipped them on, finding that not only did they fit perfectly, but they were comfortable as well. She eagerly headed outside to look for the hunter, but he wasn't in the canyon at all. She would have to wait to thank him. Ariana went about her business then, showered, and combed out her hair. She perked up at every little sound, hoping it was him. As soon as he came back, she was going to give him a great big hug.

Her plan to hug him didn't work out exactly like she thought it would have. As soon as she heard vines shaking and leaves tussling, she dropped what she was doing and ran over to him. He climbed part way down, then jumped. As soon as he turned to her, she tried to leap into his arms. Before she touched him, he slugged her right in the chest.

She fell to her back with the wind knocked out of her. As soon as she recovered, she was mad, "What was that for?"

"You attacked me first."

"I wasn't attacking, I was trying to give you a hug!"

He just stood there and cocked his head.

"Come on, you have to know what a hug is! Let me show you..." As soon as she stepped in to hug him, he backed away with a growl.

"I know the definition; I just don't understand the point of it."

She tried to step closer, and he back stepped again, "Just let me hug you, then you'll get it."

"I do not like to be touched."

She rolled her eyes, "I've noticed."

Ariana took another step closer, and he let out a low guttural growl. She wasn't afraid of his his noises anymore. She closed the gap between them, and was reminded of how tall he was. Her arms wrapped around his lower back and her face rested high on his abs. He growled again, and this time she had the pleasure of feeling the vibrations from it, as well as the sound.

She had meant to end it there. Instead, she found herself engulfed in his musky scent, which was suddenly much stronger than she had remembered. Ariana listened to his strong heartbeat, which was like that of a purebred horse. She swept her hands up, feeling the contours of his muscular back. Her body suddenly begged her to make a sexual move, to turn him on.

Her owner had never let a male couple with her, or so much as get near her. Ariana had witnessed a few matings though, had seen how violent they could be. She wanted to experience it. She shifted her gaze up at him, considering it. She was suddenly short of breath and nervous though.

She had a hard time telling if he liked her or not, and she didn't want to be embarrassed if he declined. She knew yautjas weren't the touchy-feely type, but he just seemed uncomfortable in her arms. He stayed tense, with his arms held out away from his body.

Anunnaki battled for self control. Her scent told him to pin her down and take her like a rutting animal, but his knowledge of her species held him back. Oomans were always able to mate, hence her heady scent. If a yautja female intentionally made physical contact, Anunnaki took it as an invitation to mate. For an ooman however, it was a different matter.

His body stayed rigid as he held himself back. Still, his heart rate began to climb. His loins swelled with desire. Yautjas eyes were more prone to mydriasis, which was when the pupils dilated even in bright light. It was caused by strong sexual arousal, and Anunnaki's eyes almost looked completely black. He waited for her to take things further, to indicate that she wanted him.

She slowly withdrew her arms, and brushed a strand of hair out of her face, "Thanks for the shoes..."

His response was a low hum.

Her stomach twisted in knots, and his appearance wasn't helping her indecision. He stood there, muscles still strung tight, with black eyes, and now he was breathing heavy too. He looked like a bull about to charge. It was suddenly hard for her to imagine sleeping an eight foot, two hundred pound alien with mandibles, tusks, and claws. She was still fearful of him. She didn't know Anunnaki enough to trust him not to hurt her.

He didn't even move an inch as she began to back away. She didn't know if she'd pissed him off that much by hugging him, or what. Ariana hated the idea of retreating, but he didn't seem like he was in the best mood. She paced inside the cave, trying to figure out how to put him in a better mood. Maybe after he ate he'd be less grumpy. Or, maybe cleaning like he had asked before would ease his temper.

She was familiar with a lot of yautja tools and equipment. She dug through his bag and found the right sealant. She fixed the leak in the wall, and soaked up all the water. Then, she found the disinfectant spray he'd used on her clothes, and sprayed all the fur pelts. After that, she scraped away mold in the corners of the room, and swept. He still didn't come in the cave though, and she wasn't going to wait for him.

Even after he left the canyon, his desire didn't subside. Actually, it was getting worse-he was more attuned to her scent now, and could smell her from farther away. He wanted to follow her scent, wanted to hunt her down. He couldn't resist.

She'd left the canyon. He tracked her scent through the jungle to all the beaches-even the one near the yaut hounds den. While she had swam around the jagged rocks to the beach, he carefully climbed over them. She was building more fishing traps with sticks. Watching her bend over as she worked put a lump in his throat.

She'd seen how her owner had acted around males, and she knew what she had to do. Ariana had to act bold, and initiate mating. She could take off her clothes, or try to remove his. She could simply ask him to take her. As she made new traps, she went over different scenarios in her head. More and more, he was all she could think about.

She figured the best way to go about it would be to ask about his skulls. That would get his attention, and if he seemed really into it, it would tell her if he liked her or not. When the traps were set, she swam around the rocks, and off the beach. She'd left her new shoes on the bank so they wouldn't get wet, so she slipped those back on and shook out her hair.

Her mind was distracted and she forgot for a minute she was close to the yaut hound den. As soon as she was away from the safety of the beach, three yaut hounds ambushed her, as though they had smelled her trail and had been waiting. Ariana wasn't completely unprepared though. She'd chipped away at a rock and made a sloppy spear tip.

As they circled her, Anunnaki was filled with rage. He could practically feel the testosterone flooding his veins. He had not mated the ooman, and yet he felt as possessive over as though he had. The ooman was his, and he quickly moved to protect her.

Anunnaki charged at one of the yaut hounds and grappled with it barehanded. The two other yaut hounds took the opportunity to advance towards his ooman then. With a savage growl, he snapped off one of the animals long white spines. The bone splintered with a sickening crack, and then he ran at the other yaut hounds.

He had the long spine raised, ready to plunge it into one yaut hound's body when he heard the ooman speak up, "Whoa, hey, I got this Big Guy."

He froze, looked back at the female, and cocked his head. The hound with the broken tusk as well as the one he'd just charged both started to retreat. That still left one hungry yaut hound, and Ariana carefully started to approach it. His body bristled with excitement. For her to step up and defend herself as a yautja female would made him want her even more.

The yaut hound leapt at her, and she didn't get out of the way in time. It knocked her to the ground, and the spear tip fell out of her hand. Anunnaki hovered close by, ready to haul the animal off of her. He wanted her to prove herself, but he wasn't prepared to let her die. Ariana reached for the spear tip, and as soon as she grasped it, she plunged it into the animal's throat.

Chapter 18

He drew in a deep breath, the scent of blood invigorating his senses. The ooman rolled the dead yaut hound off of her, then proudly stood above her kill. Her chest and her hands were splattered with blood. She'd proven herself worthy enough to be a mate. Even though she was an ooman, Anunnaki wanted her.

He was used to interacting with yautja females, and engaged her as such. She looked up at him, beaming. She still had a weapon in her hand though, so he let out a low warning growl. Her features changed to an innocent confusion, but Anunnaki was too far gone to take her mating experience into consideration. If a yautja female refused to drop a weapon before mating, then he would disarm her. Anunnaki did the same with the ooman.

He struck her wrist, hard enough to make her yelp and drop the spear tip. She scowled at him, "What was that for?"

She'd smelled yautja mating musk before, when it had lingered in hallways or rooms, but she'd never been faced with it so directly. Her owner had always kept males at a decent distance from her. She was shocked at how strong Anunnaki's was. It made her body tingle all over, starved for physical contact. Now she understood what he was up to.

Killing the yaut hound had obviously triggered something in him. At least now she knew he did in fact like her. But she was covered in blood, and she needed to dress her kill before the meat spoiled. She wracked her brain, trying to think what to do. She knew how to address and elder in a formal and courteous manner, but she didn't know how to decline a mating. Her owner had skipped that lesson.

She pointed her finger at him like a dog, and said a firm, "No!"

He still advanced towards her. The look in his eyes alone told her that he was plotting all the different ways to use her body. She loved his intensity, but she was afraid of it as well. Ariana took a tentative step back, and he jerked forward some, like he was ready to chase her if she ran.

Turning the head to the side or walking away were tactics to avoid a fight, but they were submissive movements, and she feared he'd see that as an invitation. She had thought telling him no would be enough, but he still stood in front of her. She took another step back, unsure of what to do. Anunnaki mirrored her movements, ready to pounce. If she ran, he would take it as an opportunity to prove his strength and speed.

She didn't run though. She just stood there, leaving him to make the next move. As soon as Anunnaki stormed forward, the female shrieked and turned away from him, instinctively bringing her arms up to shield her face. He grabbed her from behind, wrapping one arm around her hips, and his other hand held her throat.

She quickly stopped fighting him, and he inhaled a deep breath, finding that heady scent that drove him wild. But he could also smell her fear. Anunnaki was confident that once he was inside of her, she'd enjoy it. However, she'd already told him no, and he'd taken it farther

then he should have. A yautja female wouldn't have allowed a male to manhandle her after telling him off.

The oomans scent was way to tempting. He'd never wanted a female so bad. He couldn't just take her though; it would be an ultimate dishonor. He couldn't stand to let her sleep in bed every night and not be able to mate her either. It would be torture. So, he decided to give her a choice.

His gruff voice sounded from behind her, "Ooman, the next time you step inside that cave, your body is mine. I will not hesitate to take you. If you do not want it, then find somewhere else to stay."

His arms unraveled and he harshly shoved her away from him. Ariana was in a slight state of shock as she watched him storm off. He'd practically threatened her, and yet it had excited her. He wore a shabby loincloth and had pelts strapped to his back like a prehistoric caveman, and yet she wanted to follow him back to the canyon anyway.

Again, Anunnaki was sure he'd never find the ooman in his cave again. It was in her best interest that she stayed away from him. If she relied on him too much, when he left, she would struggle to survive. If she got pregnant, when he left, he'd have to take the child away. Even so, he regretted being so straightforward with her.

He was worried that he'd ruined his chances with her. He didn't think ooman females liked that level of aggression. As soon as he had calmed down and his libido was in check, he circled back to see what the ooman was up to. He cloaked himself, and climbed up into the trees. It didn't look like she was debating anything; she'd immediately started to dress her kill.

He sat down on a branch and scratched his back with the yaut hounds spine he'd broken off. She wasn't very efficient at getting all the meat off. The pelt was useless because off the holes for the spines anyway, but she butchered it even more. He listened to the neck bones snap as she twisted off the skull of the hound. He was getting horny again, knowing she was going to keep the skull as a trophy.

Once she had what she wanted, she quickly left the yaut hound territory. The smell of blood would lure more feral hounds to the area. She used the large section skin from its belly like a bag to carry the meat with her. When she started to head towards the cave then, Anunnaki got excited.

She was almost to the canyon when she veered off the other way. His hope faded. She started a fire with his technique and started to smoke the meat for jerky. While the meat cooked, she attempted to clean the yaut hound skull. She would have food for days, and didn't need his assistance. Anunnaki left the area, feeling distraught.

By the time he reached the cave though, he was livid. The ooman wasn't coming back, and it was his fault. His eyes settled on his work table, and he deliberately knocked it over. His tools and scraps of leather tumbled to the floor, and then he began to stomp the wooden table to bits. He went for the chair next, and smashed it against the wall.

He looked around for something else to destroy. He was not so angry that he'd break a trophy or smash valuable gear, and there was not much else in the cave. He stomped around for a while, unable to break anything, before he finally calmed down. Since he'd broken his

chair, he plopped down on the rock floor. There was nothing else for him to do but pick at the scab on his leg.

Ariana had decided a while ago that she would go back to the cave, but found herself stalling. She didn't know what she was worried about. She'd already seen his dick and it wasn't abnormally gigantic or anything. She'd seen yautjas mating before. She'd slept with other humans. Maybe it was just the fact that she'd never slept with a yautja that made her nervous. Or, maybe it was because she actually liked him-just a little bit.

She walked towards the canyon and turned around a million times. She worried about the blood stains on her clothes, and the hair on her legs. Just navigating through the jungle on a daily basis left her with cuts and bruises. She couldn't go to him looking like a mess.

She went to the beach, washed her clothes, and bathed. As her hair dried, she scrubbed her teeth with leaves, trying to get them clean. Once the clothes were dry, she rubbed flowers all over them, trying to make them smell better. She added a few seashells to her woven grass belt. Then, she fussed with her tangled hair. She still didn't feel prepared, but she was too excited to wait any longer.

Ariana stood at the entrance of his cave, her stomach in knots, and she hesitated before knocking on the rock, "Hello?"

The hallway was dark as always, and he didn't answer. She shuffled forward, but this time the lights didn't turn on. Sometimes the motion sensors were a little slow. Ariana walked inside, sliding her hand along one wall until she reached the room. Everything was quiet and the room remained dark.

If he was toying with her, she didn't like it. As soon as she started to back out though, she bumped into something hard. She turned around and felt in front of her blindly. Her fingers slid over reptilian skin, through the ripples of his abs, and then up to the broad planes of his chest. A smile spread across her face, and his chest rumbled in response.

Chapter 19

When he heard the ooman outside, he figured that she'd come to negotiate. Anunnaki didn't believe that she'd willingly come back to mate with him. When she spoke, he hadn't answered, hoping she'd come closer. She did. With the lights turned out, he could slip behind her then and block the entrance.

He had been prepared to sedate her with purrs and try to convince her to stay with him, but it all proved to be unnecessary. The ooman had put her hands on him, granting consent, and the smile on her face told him she did it willingly. He told himself to be gentle. He told himself that the female wasn't going anywhere and he could take his time. His rising excitement was beginning to cloud his mind though.

He wrapped his arms around her waist and pulled her body flush against his, slowly grinding his erection between her legs. She tipped back her head with a soft moan, exposing her neck. He bent down to catch her throat between his teeth, making her heart beat soar out of control. His hands slipped behind her then and he firmly grabbed her ass. She was already beginning to breathe heavily.

"Turn on the lights. I want to be able to see you."

His presence vanished for a few seconds before the lights began to glow. She immediately noticed the shattered pieces of wood all over the floor. Both the chair and the table were destroyed. Anunnaki came back, and his hands went right for her breasts. He rubbed his thumbs over them and her nipples began to harden from the attention.

"What happened to the furniture?"

He grunted passively, ignoring her question. He didn't want to talk; he wanted to fuck. Anunnaki grabbed her shirt in his claws and violently tore the front open, letting him gaze at her perky breasts. Her clothes had holes and stains anyway. Still, the ooman wasn't happy about it.

Ariana tried to slap him away, "These are the only clothes I have!"

He let out a lusty purr, and reached for her shorts next. She jumped back, and started to untie the woven belt she'd made. Once that was off, she still had to unbutton her shorts and loosen the laced strings on one side. Anunnaki wasn't that patient. He snatched the hem of her shorts and easily tore the fabric, exposing the flesh he so fiercely craved.

She swung her fists at him, "Stop that!"

His chest vibrated with a low growl, but he actually liked when she struggled. Her cheeks were flushed red, and her clothes were in tatters, partially hanging off her body. He found that arousing. Anunnaki firmly grabbed her around the middle and hauled her up above his head, showing off his strength. She gasped and clutched at his arms at first, as though he would drop her.

Ariana relaxed as stared down into his tan and red eyes. After a moment, he slowly began to lower her down. As soon as her face was close to his, she wrapped her arms around his neck and kissed him. She didn't know exactly what to do, seeing as he had tusks and mandibles, but she didn't care. She just made it up as she went.

With their mouths still connected, he carried her over to the bed and collapsed in the furs with her under him. He unclasped the pelts from his back, and tossed them aside. Then he stripped off his loincloth, and molded his body to hers. Her sex ached and pulsed insistently, wet with anticipation. She panted under him as his hands greedily slid over her bare curves.

He tore away what was left of her clothes, and then flipped her onto her stomach. She lifted her hips up, staying on her forearms with her face down, offering herself to him. His chest rattled with a purr, before he gasped her hips and thrust into her from behind. Her channel was tight around his girth.

He released all of his pent up aggression and unbridled lust. He grabbed her shoulders, thrusting in deeper. He humped her like an animal obeying it's most primal urges. She gave tiny, winded grunts each time his thick member slammed into her. Her eyes closed and her fingers dug into the furs.

She quickly learned that Anunnaki had an ungodly amount of stamina. He didn't seem to need a break between rounds. Her body started to tremble and she was so spent she could hardly breathe. Her hips eventually dropped flat to the bed. He was surprised the ooman held up as long as she did.

Still, he knew that if he teased her body long enough, and in the right ways, he could elite orgasm after orgasm from her. So he was not about to stop. His arms were propped at her sides, and he hovered over her back. His skin was hot with arousal, and she was slick with sweat. Anunnaki ground his hips against her ass, feeding his cock deep inside her channel.

As he pumped into her, he rested his forehead against the back of her hair. She started to moan and whimper again, pleasure stacking once again. She didn't have the energy to stimulate the pearl between her lips anymore, making Anunnaki work harder to send her over the edge. Closer to an orgasm, his thrusting became frantic and unending. Finally, his own pleasure exploded with hers and he came inside her in heavy spurts.

He slumped beside her to catch his breath. The ooman let out a deep sigh, then was promptly fast asleep. She hadn't even bothered to move from the position he'd left her in. He was amused at how much he'd worn her out. The poor little thing slept for several hours before even stirring.

When she did finally peek her eyes open, she still didn't get up out of bed. She messed up his pelts, balling up one for a pillow and draping others over herself. With lidded eyes, she watched him move about the cave. He had cleared out the busted furniture already and had started to build new ones. Before he was finished though, his mind went to the ooman.

He set down his tools and made her a plate of food. Anunnaki had never catered to a female before. If a yautja female even asked for something as simple as a glass of water, he would become annoyed. He wanted them out of his bed as soon as possible. It was different with the ooman.

A smile bloomed on her face when he set the plate down in front of her, "Thank you!"

He knew he was being too eager, but as she ate, she slipped his mask on. It took him a few minutes to adjust the settings for an ooman, but he ran a fertility scan on her. During a mating season, Yautja females mated as close to ovulation as possible, and then within hours an egg could be fertilized. Oomans worked a little differently.

It all depended when she ovulated, and if there was still sperm present or not. Her egg would only stick around a day at a time. His scan came back negative, but she could get pregnant even days later if she ovulated in time and his seed was still inside her. The more times he mated her the better the chances were, and Anunnaki was more than happy to provide his services.

His organ began to swell at the thought of taking her again. His body was used to seeding as many yautja females as he could within a short mating season, so he still had a lot more cum to fill her with. He set his mask aside and crawled over her. He gently slid his nails against her scalp before grabbing a fistful of her hair. The ooman set her legs apart for him, but her eyes fluttered closed. She was still tired.

He didn't want to drain away too much of her energy, "Come, take a bath with me."

"Mph, only if you carry me."

He let out a reluctant huff, but gathered her in his arms anyway and carried her to the pool under the waterfall. As he stepped down into the water with her, her toes touched first, and it was cold. Much to his amusement, she whined and lifted her feet up and away from the water. He submerged her in the frigid water anyway. Ariana turned and hugged herself against him, trying not to lose too much heat.

Baths for him were usually a monotonous step-by-step process for him, but with the female clinging to him, he didn't focus on getting clean. Her arms were draped around his neck, and her cheek rested on his chest. As she listened to the steady pounding of his heart, she began to fade again. The ooman had seemed worried he'd drop her earlier, but now she trusted him enough to fall asleep in his arms in deep water. He lightly stroked her back while his other hand let water drip from his claws into her hair.

Chapter 20

His new tactic was to starve the lizards out of their tunnels. They ate mostly small mammals that wandered too close to their holes. They grabbed them in their jaws and swiftly drug them underground. It was an easy way to get a meal. If Anunnaki pissed in the dirt around the holes though, animals stayed away, meaning that the lizards actually had to leave their dens to hunt more often.

When one of the giant monitor lizards slunk from it hole, he closed the hatches over all the nearby tunnels. Usually at this point, the lizards ran. If it had come out despite the smell of his urine, he knew it was desperate. It was starving. It lifted it's head up, flicking it's tongue in his direction. The yautja had always been a nuance to them, but now he was on the menu.

Anunnaki climbed down from the tree, never letting his eyes off the lizard. He squared himself in front of the animal, stepping up to the challenge. It's long body was all muscle like a constrictor snake, and it's claws could easily slice through even a yautjas tough hide. This was what he'd been waiting for all those cycles, for one of them to face him with the intent to kill, and not just to wound him and escape.

He dropped his wrist blades, but that activated a bio mask setting. If he drew a weapon, his mask knew that he was about to fight. Yautjas had a strict code of honour though, so it was important to know the prey was carnivorous, healthy, the right age, or even the right sex. His vision lit up in red. The animal had a small irregularity in its heart beat. Even with the medical condition, it could probably still kick his ass, but Anunnaki wouldn't feel as proud of the trophy.

He retracted his wrist blades and slowly backed away. The lizard eyed him suspiciously, but let him retreat-there was easier prey to catch then a yautja. He reopened the tunnel hatches, then found a different place to hunt. Anunnaki waited for hours, but no other monitor lizards made an appearance. His disappointment was starting to boil into anger.

When he returned to the cave, the ooman was still in bed and that set him off, "Get up woman!"

She abruptly sat up, scowling at him.

"Get up, and sew yourself some new clothes! You have chores to do!"

She stretched out on the bed, and then rubbed at her eyes. Anunnaki nudged her side with his boot. She clamored out of bed in a hurry, but then yawned and swayed in place. He let out a low growl, trying to get her moving. Instead of heading for the workbench like he wanted, she grabbed a cup of water and then reached for food next.

"Get over there and make yourself some clothes!"

Anunnaki was getting bossy again and it was pissing her off real fast. She grit her teeth, trying her best not to start a fight, "What are my chores exactly?"

“Sweep out the cave, sanitize the bed, wash dishes, polish my equipment, take stock of supplies, sew any holes in my clothes. In general, keep this place looking nice. Can you do that?”

That was it. Naked or not, she headed for the exit, “I’m not your maid!”

Anunnaki blocked her, “Where do you think your going?”

“I left jerky tied up in a tree, as well as the yaut hound skull. I have to go get it before animals find it.” She tried to step around him, but he sidestepped and blocked her path again.

“You’re not even dressed!”

“So?”

He spun her around and shoved her towards the workbench, “You’re not leaving until you help out around here!”

She walked over to the new table he’d built, plotting different ways to get back at him. She eventually decided to try and tease him. Ariana slowly bent down to pick up a pelt from the basket. She slid her hand on her leg and bent down as far as she could, touching the floor with her fingertips. Then, she selected a random piece of leather and turned to see if he was watching.

He was of course. He hadn’t moved an inch from where she’d left him.

She straightened up, and began to measure herself in front of him. She pushed out her breasts and measured her bust several times, acting as though she couldn’t get it right. Then when she applied the measurements to the pelt, she rested her knees on the table and made sure to move her ass in a seductive manner. She proceeded to make a pair of shorts like her ruined ones, posing every so often to keep his attention.

It wasn’t long before she could feel the heat from his body behind her. She backed up, purposefully bumping up against him, “Oh, sorry.”

He tipped his hips forward, letting her feel his erection. He slid his hand down her arms and pried the knife from her hand, “Work later.”

“I don’t know, you made it sound like I had so much to get done.”

He started to guide her away from the table, and towards the bed, “I’ll do it.”

“All of it?”

She felt his mandibles gliding over her neck, up to her ear, “Yes.”

She slipped twisted around, slipping out of his grip, “No thanks.”

He let out a savage growl, grabbed her, and pinned her against the nearest wall before she saw it coming. She worried for a split second that he’d hurt her, but quickly realized he wasn’t displaying aggression. He was merely being dominant, and there was a difference. He restrained her, but his intention wasn’t to harm her.

“I told you once already that if you entered the cave, your body was mine.”

She wasn't physically stronger than him like yautja females, but she spoke to him as though she was, "I said no!"

He stared her down for a moment, before reluctantly dropping his hands. He turned away to do the chores he'd demanded that she do, but she wasn't about to let him off the hook that easy. Ariana went back to the table and finished her first outfit. Once she had clothes to wear, she left to get the jerky and the yaut hound skull.

Since he was still doing chores when she got back, she decided to help him finish. With both of them working, everything went by faster than she'd imagined. Every time he passed her, he groped or caressed her in some way. She clung to her anger, but it was honestly hard to stay mad at him. When she thought everything was done, she went to grab a snack.

Anunnaki lifted up the hound skull and started inspecting it. She'd removed much of the brain matter inside, but there was still some dry connective tissue clinging to the bone. She watched him grab a few jars from a bag, then he sat down to with the skull and started to clean it. It didn't take long, and it was smooth and shiny when he was done. Anunnaki set it down beside one of his monstrous skulls.

When he started to leave the cave then, she scrambled for something to say, "Get back here!"

Anunnaki stiffly turned around, and his mandibles began to spread in a hostile manner. He was not used to anyone giving him commands.

"Come here!"

A deep growl resonated from his chest.

She untied the laces to her shorts, and shimmied them down, "I said come here Big Guy."

He walked forward calmly, his eyes on her body. She kicked her shorts away, then lifted her shirt over her head. She backed up, baiting him towards the end of the bed. When he couldn't contain himself any longer, he practically football tackled her. Her back hit the soft mattress, and he firmly pinned her arms above her head. His mouth covered one breast, swirling his tongue around her nipple.

She fought to get out of his grip, so she could untie his loincloth. When that didn't work, she wrapped her legs around his hips, trying to bring him closer. His mouth moved to her other breast, giving it equal attention. She ground her hips against his erection, begging him to invade her. He continued to tease her nipples and she struggled to stimulate her clit just from the hard bulge in his loincloth.

When she started a whine, he lifted his mouth away, "Tell me you're mine."

"I'm yours."

"Tell me I own your body."

She panted, "Yes."

His pointed teeth and mandibles came inches from her face, "Say it!"

"You own my body."

“Now tell me to take you.”

“Take me.”

He firmly pressed his hips between her legs, sending sparks through her loins. He rumbled, “I’m not convinced.”

“Take me, I’m all yours! You own me! You can have my body whenever it pleases you—night or day, when I’m bathing or sleeping! Take me, please!”

He hastily untied his loincloth and plunged inside her depths. Her toes curled and she let out soft whimpers and moans. When she bit down on his shoulder, he began to thrust into her faster. He grunted into her ear, and his hands tightened around her small wrists. He quickly sent her over the edge, and she arched her back as her release swept through her.

Chapter 21

Ariana got up, grabbed her bag of jerky, then sat back back down in bed next to him. That gave him idea. She had burned off what little fat she had when she first came to island. Then when he started feeding her, she only gained muscle tone. A certain amount of body fat was necessary to have a baby.

After some quick research on his wrist device, he learned that the ideal BMI for an ooman to conceive was 20 to 25. Being too thin had caused estrogen and progesterone concentrations in her body go down, making it harder for her to get pregnant. If he wanted a child from her, he had to fatten her up just a bit. He searched his food stores for something sweet. Anunnaki disliked sweets almost as much as he disliked vegetables. Sugar was valuable for the energy it could provide though, so he kept it around just in case he needed it.

He handed her a small bag, and she immediately opened it up. It looked like clear marbles inside, “What is it?”

“Eat them. They’re good for you.”

She plucked one out of the bag and stuck it in her mouth. It was hard, and really sweet, but didn’t have a flavor, “Candy? I don’t know if I’d exactly consider candy good for you.”

Anunnaki nuzzled her neck with his mandibles, “You have to gain weight if you’re going to carry my child.”

Her fluttered nervously. In yautja culture, the females usually raised the children alone without a partner’s help. Being human though, she wouldn’t have the means to raise a kid alone. Anunnaki would have to stick around and help her raise it. If he wasn’t coming to her just for a sexual release then, that meant he wanted to be with her, wanted to raise a family with her.

While she ate candy in bed, he suited up for a walk through the jungle. He had to keep his scent fresh around the lizards tunnels. He put on the black netting, the metal shin and forearm guards. The female was watching as he fixed the belt around his waist.

When he grabbed his mask, she finally asked, “Where you going?”

“Outside.”

“Can I come?”

He didn’t want to endanger her by bringing her on a hunt, but the chances of a lizard actually making an appearance were slim, “Yea I suppose.”

She leapt to his side, and eagerly followed him out of the canyon. It was freeing, knowing that she didn’t have to worry about feral hounds or aggressive boars. She knew Anunnaki had her back, and so she could explore and enjoy the beauty of jungle. Anunnaki wasn’t walking around just for the fun of it though. When he came across a big hole, he pissed around it.

After he did it a few more times she finally had to ask, “What are you doing exactly?”

“Hunting tactic.”

She didn’t understand how pissing around holes helped him hunt, but she asked, “What are you hunting?”

“An elusive, five hundred pound, carnivorous lizard. It can stand on its hind legs and balance with its strong tail. It can move very rapidly for short distances. Their skin is reinforced by armoured scales that contain tiny bones, forming a natural chain-mail.”

She hadn’t put much thought into why he was on the island, but it only made sense he was there to hunt. He sounded very passionate about the prey he was after too, but it just scared the hell out of her. She’d seen one of the oversized lizards before, and she never wanted to encounter another one. He was hunting something equivalent to the komodo dragon, except it was much bigger than the mere 10ft specimens found on earth. She worried about him going after an animal like that, but reminded herself that he had other large skulls in the cave already.

Still, she had to ask, “Is that what cut open your leg?”

“Yes.”

Every five hundred feet or so, there was another large hole. He must have been holding it in for quite some time to be able to mark so many. While he did his business, she casually searched for food. She plopped a nut in her mouth, but only chewed it twice before spitting it out. Anunnaki looked back at her, arching one of his spiky brows. There was plenty of food in the cave though, and she could afford to be picky.

He headed towards the next hole, and she lagged behind him, “I should have brought water along.”

“You’re thirsty?”

She nodded glumly.

“You can boil salt water, tap tree trunks, drink from leaves, dig for water... or, you can cut open vines.”

Anunnaki found a suitable vine, then grabbed her shoulders and positioned her under it. He drew his wrist blades, and cleanly sliced the vine. He lowered the end of it to her lips, and a small stream of water poured into her mouth. He went from vine to vine. Some had more water than others.

He cut another vine, but as she stepped to catch the water in her mouth, his palm hit her chest. “Don’t drink this water, but smell it.”

She timidly leaned forward, and wrinkled her nose.

“Can you smell it?”

“I smell something.”

“This type of vine is no good to drink from. It is poison.”

“Oh...” She stepped away and tried to memorize the color of the vine and the shape of the leaves for future reference.

The day passed quickly for him, but it must have been a long day for the ooman. When the sun began to set, he led her back to the canyon. As soon as they were in the cave, she crawled right into the bed. His injury was nearly healed now though, and he did not need to sleep but every other night. He figured he'd leave her to rest, and go on a hunt.

As soon as he started to leave though, the ooman popped up her head, "Don't go."

Anunnaki hesitated in the doorway, before walking over to her.

"Come to bed."

He wasn't tired, but he did hope to mate her again. Anunnaki undressed in a hurry, and then laid down in bed with her. She immediately snuggled up against him. When tried to slip his hand between her legs though, she shoved him away. When he started to untie her shorts, she slapped his hand.

He held back a disgruntled rumble and settled into the furs, debating whether or not to leave. He could just stay until she fell asleep, and then try to mate her. When he was younger, he'd tried that with a yautja female once-it had been fun, until she whipped around and grabbed ahold of his balls. He doubted the ooman would be as vengeful, however, patience wasn't one of his virtues. He tapped his fingers on the bed restlessly, then started to scratch his behind.

"Don't scratch your ass crack when I'm trying to sleep."

He let out a low baritone rumble, then rolled out of bed.

She clutched his arm, "I'm sorry, don't go."

He leaned down and pressed his mandibles to her forehead, "I only came to bed for a chance to mate. I'll be back in a few hours."

She let out a chuckle, "Jerk."

He was gone more than just a few hours. The sun was already up by the time he got back. He'd run into three lizards all hunting together. Once he'd singled one out and separated it from its friends, it had attacked, and then ran away like usual. Still, Anunnaki felt like he was getting closer to victory.

He went right to the table and dug through his toolbox. When the lizard had attacked, he'd swiped at its throat with his wrist blades, but his timing had been off. The lizard had chomped down on his wrist then. It could have taken his hand off if the wrist blade mechanism hadn't been there, but now the metal was crushed in and wouldn't unlatch.

He sat down and began fiddling with the broken thing. It was probably fixable, if he could just get it off him first. The lock was jammed and the hinges were smashed. He ended up having to dislocate his thumb to slip it off. He scratched his leg with his other foot and fiddled with the device.

"Are you scratching again Cave Monkey?"

He fluidly rose from his chair and walked to the edge of the bed, "Ooman, I should kick your ass for speaking to me with such disrespect."

“Why don’t you spank my ass instead?”

She let out a high pitched scream as he sprung at her. Anunnaki grabbed her forearms and manhandled her, trying to flip her over. She shrieked and fought him as best she could, but he wrestled her onto his lap with her ass up. He gave her cheek one good swat, and watched how it giggled from the impact. He let out a satisfied rumble, and released her.

She rolled away from him, and rubbed her ass cheek, “That really hurt!”

He slowly crawled over her, his arms beside her head like he was going to do a pushup, “Keep complaining and I’ll do it again.”

She grinned up at him playfully, considering it. Apparently, he’d woken her up too early though, because she shook her head with a yawn. As tempted as he was to continue playing, he knew it was best that he let her sleep. Anunnaki got up and went back to tinkering with his busted wrist blades while she piled furs on top of herself.

Chapter 22

As the days went by, Ariana steadily gained a healthy ten pounds. Just that little bit of fat had a big impact. The diagnostic scans now said she was at her peak of receptivity, yet, she still did not carry his child. Anunnaki wanted to breed her at every opportunity, however, she usually complained that she was sore, tired, or not in the mood. He laid in bed, waiting for her to wake up so they could try for a baby again.

When she rolled away from him, it was an opportunity to get up and grab his mask without disturbing her. He knew he was being too eager though. Anunnaki had checked her yesterday, the day before, and the day before that as well. She wasn't getting pregnant as fast as a yautja female would, but it really hadn't been that long. He just needed to be patient.

Anunnaki grabbed the fur she was laying on, and drug her closer. It difficult for him to have patience though. He wanted to pester her. Anunnaki lightly stroked her hair, subtly trying to wake her up. Ariana wasn't always asleep when he touched her, sometimes she just pretended because didn't want him to stop. After a minute though, she felt him rock his hips against her, pressing a certain bulge to her ass.

"Anunnaki!"

He firmly grabbed her hips, digging his fingers into her suplex flesh, and he ground his erection against her again, hoping to turn her on.

She flipped around and kissed his jaw, "Not now... How about we fool around under the waterfall later today?"

He grumbled like an old man, got out of bed, and started getting dressed. She thought he was mad at her until he squatted down beside the bed, "I'm going hunting. Did you want to come?"

"Yes!"

Last time she'd tagged along they had been gone all day, so she made sure to strap water and snacks to her belt. She chewed on seasoned jerky and wandered around smelling flowers as he hunted. This time, he was up in the trees above her, scouting for a big boar to turn into their dinner. As soon as he heard something large moving underground, his head swiveled to the ooman.

Ariana usually stayed a good distance away from the big holes. However, since he was trying to starve the lizards out, they were getting bolder, and targeting larger prey. Anunnaki swiftly climbed down and shoved her into a crevice between tree roots. She dropped the bag of jerky in the process and he covered her mouth before she yelled at him for it.

Anunnaki waited to see if the lizard had heard them and would move onto a different hole or not. As soon it's tongue extended from the hole, he said, "Go back to the canyon."

Keeping his focus on the lizard, Anunnaki positioned himself downwind. He crouched beside a tree with his cloaking device engaged, ready for a fight. Only then did he realize

that the ooman hadn't budged. The ooman wouldn't listen to any command he gave, even if it was to save her life. The lizard's jaws rose from the hole, and then its entire head. Its eyes quickly shifted around, zeroing in on anything from insects to birds.

Ariana was on the other side of a tree, hidden from view. If he were to move and shove the ooman along, the lizard would just sink back down in its hole. Its long claws reached out and gripped the crumbling dirt edge of the hole, and it started to lift itself up. Its forked tongue flicked at the ground like a snake. Its jaws parted a little and it picked up a small piece of jerky. It swallowed it down, and went for more, practically following a dotted line to the ooman.

He couldn't make a move yet, or close the hatch over its hole. It had a very long body, and part of it was still underground. It would attempt to grab the ooman and drag her under. Its tongue flicked around the tree where she was hiding, but it dipped its head to pick up what was left of the jerky first. It crawled forward, its hind legs finally brought out of the hole. It stopped using its tongue—it was already sure where the ooman was.

It came down to endangering her life, or losing a potential trophy. Anunnaki felt he was making the wrong decision, and yet he let the lizard continue forward. Its body started to curve around the large tree trunk. Its tail was still in the hole, and the hatch wouldn't close. If it struck at her, then he could close the hatches, but the ooman might be dead before he could intervene.

He'd wanted this trophy his entire life though. He'd lived on the island for many cycles just to catch it. The island would soon enter a flood season, and the lizards would hibernate in an air pocket under the island. If he missed too many more opportunities, he'd have to stay another whole cycle. No one back home would chastise him for letting the ooman die.

Anunnaki couldn't do it. He couldn't use the ooman he'd been mating like a piece bait. He wanted her more than he wanted the trophy. As soon as he stood up to charge at the animal, his position was given away. The lizard quickly back pedaled, its tail guiding it to the tunnel opening. He ran at it and slid in the dirt like he was scoring a homerun, but the lizard disappeared before he reached it.

His hands clenched into fists as he stood up, "Ooman!"

She slowly rose from the crevice behind the tree and peeked around the trunk at him guiltily.

"Next time I tell you to go, you go!"

His vision blurred for a moment as his head hit the dirt, and the ooman started to scream at the top of her lungs. The searing pain came flooding in next; it tore through his calf muscle, burning as though it was on fire. His hands slid through the dirt as something drug him back. The lizard hadn't fully retreated. It had ahold of his leg, and intended to drag him underground for dinner.

The ooman crouched down and tried to assist him, but she was too weak to be of any help, "Get away from me ooman!"

He kicked at the lizard's jaws with his good leg to no avail. The lizard's teeth were short and curved, designed to keep a hold of prey. But since the teeth weren't slicing through his

leg though, he braced his hands on the rim of the hole and began to lift himself out. The lizard stayed attached, fighting to yank him back down. Just before the lizard's snout was above the soil, it let go.

Anunnaki clamored away from the hole, knowing that the lizard wasn't done yet, "Ariana, leave! Go back to the canyon and wait for me!"

All she could do was stare at the deep holes in his calf, "I'm not letting you get killed! I can help, just give me a weapon!"

The lizard slowly stuck its head out of the hole. Anunnaki didn't stand up, baiting the lizard. He wanted the animal to think he was more wounded than he really was. That caused the ooman to worry about him more though. She hovered close to his side, as though she was ready to tackle the beast barehanded. He had to get rid of her.

He took off his wrist controls and handed it to her, "Here. If I die, then you inherit my ship and everything in it. My bio mask just recorded what I said, if you need proof for any reason. Now go away."

She took his wrist device, and started beating him over the head with it, "I never wanted just your food, your protection, or your goddamned ship!"

He tensely splayed his mandibles at her, but kept his focus on the lizard. Its eyes shifted between them, deciding on a target. He was wounded. Yet, she was smaller. The lizard chose a target and attacked.

The lizard lept at Ariana. Anunnaki grabbed her ankle and yanked her to the ground before the animal could touch her. Her eyes widened as she stared at the plated belly of the lizard. Anunnaki gathered her in his arms and rolled, getting her out from under the hungry animal.

He shoved her away, "Go back to the canyon and wait for me. I don't want to have to worry about you."

He wanted to do it on his own, that was clear to her. He had experience; he already had a few massive skulls and a giant fur rug in the cave. Her presence was more likely to distract him. He was yautja, he wasn't going to die in his bed peacefully anyway. Still, she was reluctant to leave him wounded in the jungle, about to face an animal similar to a huge komodo dragon.

The lizard was stalking her, slowly inching its way forward. As soon as Ariana turned away and ran, the lizard tried to follow. Anunnaki had her back though. He held onto the lizards tail, making its attention switch back to him. Ariana didn't stop running until she was at the edge of the canyon. She had this crushing feeling in her chest, and it wasn't from running.

Chapter 23

Ariana paced back and forth in the cave for what felt like hours. She didn't want to like Anunnaki so much, because then she worried about him more. If he died, she knew she could survive on the island alone-but she didn't want to. When she finally couldn't wait any longer, she decided to go looking for him. Ariana grabbed a glaive off the cave wall, and climbed out of the canyon.

She was prepared to find carnage and blood at least. She worried that she'd find him severely wounded somewhere on the jungle floor, close to death. Instead, she ran into him on his way back to the cave. She let out a loud breath as soon as she spotted him. The lizard's head rested up on his shoulder, still dripping blood. He had other parts to the animal strapped to his hip, and a big piece of hide strapped to his back.

All the raw animal bits grossed her out, but the rest of him had her impressed. Ariana stopped dead in her tracks, tipped her hips, and stood there ogling. His muscles glistened from the humid air, making them look more defined. His detailed bio mask was splattered with the animal's blood, making him look more fierce. Even the way his sharp black claws clutched the head of the lizard turned her on.

Anunnaki was not happy to see the ooman at first. He had told her to wait in the canyon for him, and yet she stood in the jungle. He did not like when others touched his property, and she had his glaive in hand. Females were supposed to be impressed with a male's ability to claim trophies. However, the ooman seemed to think that he needed assistance taking down prey.

As he brushed past the ooman, she caught his arm, "I'm so wet for you right now."

His spiky brows shot up, and he looked down at her from the corner of his eyes. The ooman was impressed with him after all. He let out a soft rattle, and puffed out his chest some, swelling with pride. He briefly debated between fucking her right that second, or tending to his new trophy. He stupidly chose the trophy.

Ariana followed him back to the canyon, her mind still in the gutter. He was covered in blood, some of it his own, and yet she wanted a round of celebratory sex. He set the animal parts down in the moss, retrieved his tools, and got to work. As he crouched, cleaning the skull, she slid her fingers along his back, trying to gain his attention. He shrugged her off.

The whole point of winning trophies was to attract mates, but he was ignoring her. Still, she figured that he was excited and had work to do, and so she left him alone. He polished the lizard's skull and placed it in the cave. He made its claws into a necklace, cleaned the pelt, and made weapons from the rest. Then he cooked some of the lizard meat he'd brought back.

He put the leftovers in the refrigeration unit without asking her if she wanted away, then headed to bathe. Ariana took off her shoes, and sat on the edge of the rock with her legs dangling in the water. She chewed on her lower lip as he undid his belt. He carefully laid his

mask, forearms guards, and the rest of his clothes on the rocks. She followed the movements of his hands as he rubbed himself down.

She'd told him earlier that they could fool around under the waterfall, so she suggested it again, "Mmm, should I get in there with you?"

He didn't even look up at her, "I'll be out in a second. Can you take my clothes inside to be washed?"

Since he'd asked nicely and hadn't demanded that she do it, Ariana pulled her legs out of the water and gathered his clothes in her arms. She took them inside the cave, and even washed them for him. She polished his armor, and neatly put them away. When he came back inside to grab a loincloth, he didn't seem to notice what she'd done. Ariana didn't bother to bring it to his attention.

He sat in the chair and played on his wrist device then. She figured he was gloating, telling his friends that he had finally killed a giant monitor lizard. Ariana made herself some food, then started doing chores. After a few hours, he was still on his wrist device. She didn't know what else to do.

She hoped he'd offer to come with her, "I'm going to check the fishing traps."

He didn't even look up at her.

She didn't enjoy being ignored, "Hello? Did you hear me?"

He grunted passively, "Go ahead. I'll be here."

"Fine."

As soon as the ooman left, Anunnaki started to pack his things. The only place he could land his ship was on the biggest beach, and the ooman would likely be there first. So he hovered his ship above the canyon instead. He hauled all of his trophies up first, then his weapons, clothes, furniture, the rug, and pelts from the bed. The cave looked bare except for the food stores and a bag of medical supplies. He intended to leave those for her when he left.

When she returned to find that the cave was gutted, she had mixed emotions, "What's going on?"

Anunnaki didn't lift his head from his wrist device.

He manipulated his ship, and had land on the big stretch of beach to wait for him. Now that he had his trophy, his clan law forbid him from staying any longer than necessary. Ariana turned her attention to the basket of random pelts used to make clothes, and the food storage unit. It didn't make sense not to pack those, unless he was leaving her behind.

She hadn't brought up the subject before, afraid to hear what he'd say, "You have your trophy now and so have to leave, don't you?"

"Yes."

"And I'm not coming with you, right?"

"By law, I can't even let you on my ship. I ask permission to take you on board, just until I could claim you as a mate or property, but the council refused. I have to make an appearance

in court, and present my case, which will take some time.”

“But then you’ll come back?”

“Ideally, yes.”

“How long?”

He still had his eyes on the wrist device, “Probably three months... Six by ooman standards.”

Ariana nodded, holding back tears. Really, it was a better situation than she could have hoped for. Anunnaki did want to take her with him, he just couldn’t. He said be back for her. A few months by herself wouldn’t be that bad.

“I left you food, medical equipment, a few tools, and some leather to make clothes.”

Her voice almost cracked, “Thank you.”

“Ariana, if they say no, then it’s out of my hands. I won’t be back.”

She nodded solemnly.

“In case that happens, I feel compelled to let you know that there is a mainland close by. If you were to make a raft, the current would take you to it in a matter of weeks. There is more food, more shelter options, and more water sources-but also more dangers. If I don’t come back then, at least you could get off the island.”

He headed out of the cave then, but she followed him in silence all the way back to the beach. It was the same beach she’d been dropped off at. Anunnaki had the ship’s engine start up, and the ramp drop. He didn’t intend to say any goodbyes, but something else made him turn back to the ooman. He’d been so caught up in everything that he hadn’t ran a diagnostic scan on her that day yet.

Anunnaki’s hands reached out to grab her stomach, “Your pregnant.”

She could hardly breathe all of the sudden, “What?”

Anunnaki purred softly, and backed away up the metal ramp of the ship.

“You’re not still leaving me, are you? You can’t!”

“Look at it this way ooman, either way I’ll have to come back to the island now: for you, or for the child.”

He turned away from her without another word, and marched up into the ship. Ariana ran up the ramp after him, but the door closed right in front of her face. She was beginning to panic. He couldn’t seriously leave her in the jungle pregnant for six months! She beat on the metal door as hard as she could, but the metal ramp started to collapse.

The ramp disappeared out from under her, and she fell into the hot sand, “Anunnaki! Please! You can’t do this to me! Anunnaki!”

Her chest felt tight as the ship slowly began to lift off. He would come back in six months to take her home, or once the child was born, he’d come and take it away from her. Ariana

watched the ship lift off, and steadily disappear. She began to hyperventilate. She couldn't breathe.

Chapter 24

Anunnaki plopped down in the chair with a loud exhale, and slowly rubbed his temples. He had been able to hear her beating on the door in a panic. A yautja female would not think twice about being in a survival situation while pregnant, but for an ooman, the concept was more daunting. He did not like having to abandon his mate, but he didn't know what else to do.

His clan allowed exotic species as pets, servants, mates, and even just as independent citizens. However, the rules could get complicated. To gain independent citizenship to his clan could take five years. To acquire an exotic pet could take two years. As Anunnaki had said before, taking her as a mate could take six months. He hoped that since she was already pregnant that though, that the process would be faster.

Right after he'd killed the monitor lizard, he'd contacted immigration services to get her a temporary pass. Since they couldn't find her records from her previous owner though, it was denied. He contacted clan authorities then to see if she could live in his ship until she was granted citizenship as his mate. That way his ship could hover above the planet and she wouldn't have to stay in the jungle. But, they had refused that idea as well.

He filled out an application for immigration services, but until they found her records as a servant, it wouldn't do any good. The ooman still wore a metal collar. Technically she still belonged to someone else. Anunnaki couldn't officially claim her as a mate if she was someone else's property.

He also needed a permit because if she ever made it back to Earth with information about the yautja species, it could be detrimental to their hunting. He needed to have specific knowledge of her care and diet, as they wanted to make sure the ooman would not be mistreated. Once they granted a permit, she'd need an immediate doctor's visit. She'd have to be clean of any foreign bacteria or illnesses. She'd also need a filter implanted in her throat to be able to breathe the planet's air without ill effects.

Anunnaki tried to work quickly. He filled out applications, answered questions, found a doctor that was knowledgeable about oomans. He also hired an attorney to help things along. A council watched his bio mask recordings and scrutinized Ariana's behavior and personality. They would not allow an unbalanced ooman into their clan. Even an ooman had the potential break codes of honor and could ruin the clan's reputation.

They admired her stubbornness and survival ability as Anunnaki had. She was not overly violent or illogical. She had been property to a yautja before. She had a knowledge of the yautja language and customs already. She was already with child. Eventually, they even found her records as a servant.

Everything was coming together, except for one little glitch. Her records indicated that the previous owner had declared the ooman deceased. Records would need to be changed. As well, her previous owner would need to be contacted. The yautja female needed to sign her

custody over to him. However, the female was apparently on a hunt, and wasn't answering any transmissions.

Six months passed surprisingly quick. She had to remake all her clothes so that they'd fit. Even her feet were swollen, so she couldn't wear the shoes Anunnaki had made for her. She had to be careful not to sneeze, or she'd accidentally pee herself. It was pretty standard pregnancy stuff, and Ariana was doing just fine in the jungle at first.

But then it started to rain nonstop. Water had always drained into the pool below the waterfall, but since the tides had risen, the canyon began to flood. Climbing in and out of the canyon had become near impossible anyway. So she set up camp in between three monstrous tree trunks. The fire kept feral yaut hounds away, and the canopy she'd built kept the rain off.

It seemed like everything was going to be ok, until her back started to ache. When she first felt the baby kick, Ariana had broken down in tears because Anunnaki wasn't there to share it with. She was tired all the time, yet she couldn't sleep. Eventually her belly was so big she had to waddle to the fishing traps, and getting that done took up most of the day now.

At eight months, it dawned on her that Anunnaki wasn't coming back for her. He'd show up only to take her child away once it was born. Ariana couldn't let that happen. For hours at a time, she weaved grass and young bark into lengths of rope. He'd said there was a mainland close by. She was determined to reach it.

The food storage unit floated like a cooler, so she built it into the center of the raft, where she could still lift the lid. The bigger the raft, the less it would get tossed around by the waves, but Ariana could only manage so much. The sun would be her worst enemy though. She had to build something over the logs to create shade.

Working every day for as long as she could, it still took her a whole month to make something sturdy enough to fair the open ocean. She dug grooves in the sand so that she could push it out into the water easier. The raft gently bobbed up and down on the blue water. Before she climbed on, she looked down at her bracelet. She'd found it on the ground when she'd first been dumped on the island, and she assumed it was Anunnaki's.

She wanted to believe that he was still going to come back for her. However, she had a child to think about now. She brushed her hand over her bulging stomach. No one was going to take her baby away from her. Ariana untied the bracelet and dropped it in the sand. Then she climbed on top of the raft, and let the current steer the way.

His mate was going to give birth soon, and he still wasn't with her. Anunnaki was crushing another tablet in his hands when he heard a beep at the door. He stormed over to answer it. A tall female with bright orange and yellow stripes and long dreds stood in front of him. Her dreds were woven together to form one big braid down her back.

"If you're not from my attorneys office, or immigration services, go away!"

The female arched a brow at him, "I heard you were inquiring about the ooman I previously owned?"

Anunnaki addressed her in a clipped, but softer tone, "Yes. You declared her dead, so assume you want nothing to do with her. I need you to sign some documents or give a verbal confirmation stating that you give the ooman over to me."

The female casually tipped her hips and shrugged, "I don't give anything away for free."

"It is very important that you relinquish custody quickly. The ooman carries my child inside her, and she is still on that island."

She looked up at the ceiling and tapped her fingers on his doorframe before saying, "I heard about your most recent trophy. So I'll tell you what: I will give you the female, if you mate with me. I'm a more worthy female than that scrawny little ooman. I'll give you a strong son, a hunter you'll be proud of."

"I don't have time for this crap."

She kept her voice misleadingly sweet, "Then you should just agree and get it over with."

His chest pulsed with a dark growl, but he stepped to the side to allow the female in his room. She gracefully walked around the room, admiring the trophies on the wall. Anunnaki undressed, and stood there waiting for her to make the first move. As soon as her fingertips touched his chest, he released his pent up aggression.

He grabbed her wrists, swung her to the ground, and mounted her. She sensually ran her nails down his chest. Anunnaki slapped her hands away with a growl, pulled her thong to the side and plunged the hard length of him deep inside her. He cuffed his hand over her throat, lightly choking her. He humped her carelessly, simply trying to spill his seed inside her. He leaned down, splaying his mandibles inches from her face, showing just how much he disliked the pairing.

The female didn't care if he wasn't enjoying it or not. She was both him in rank, and would get what she wanted—a well-bred pup that would carry on his strength, skills and determination. As soon as he felt his release, he lifted off the female and put back on his clothes. He presented a document on a tablet for her to sign, and then opened the door for her.

"Please leave immediately."

He followed the female out, and headed to his attorney's office. After a brief discussion, he learned that even with the oomans custody surrendered to him, he couldn't bring her into the clan. The council had finally reached a decision. They decided that the clan had enough ooman members already, and they wanted to keep a balance.

Anunnaki slammed the tablet down on the desk, making the holograms shake, "This is outrageous! Who voted on the decision? I'll track them down and make them change their minds!"

The male in front of him remained calm, but tense, "You know I can't give you their names, and swaying their opinion would be considered a criminal act."

Anunnaki placed both of his palms on top the desk, and tried to think. He didn't know what else to do. He couldn't switch to a more liberal clan. He'd taken an oath when he took his chiva swearing that he'd never change clans. He was too loyal to go back on that oath.

Chapter 25

When he returned to the island only to find that she wasn't there, he felt unusually short of breath. The cave was flooded. Her scent was gone. He jogged through the rain, searching the island in a hurry, finding few signs of her. But the tides had risen, so even her fishing traps were underwater.

His throat grew thick, knowing that she could have perished. Anunnaki dove into the canyon, and swam into the cave to check for a body, but the cave was completely empty. He couldn't find any remains, but much of the island was swamp now because of all the rain. Yaut hounds could have taken her. If his mate and unborn child were dead, he would blame himself. It would be his fault for mating her in the first place, and his fault for leaving her all by herself.

One detail nagged at him though. He'd left provisions for her in the refrigeration unit, and yet it was nowhere to be found either. He ran back to his ship, which was still resting on the beach, and he looked out at the ocean. He hoped that the ooman had made it to the mainland, and that she was still alive. She was due to give birth in a week, and Anunnaki needed to be there.

She'd been having pain like cramps all day, but she was sure the baby wasn't due yet. She'd kept careful track of it. She still had a whole week to reach the mainland before she went into labor. Her body seemed to have other ideas. A sudden rush of water between her legs told her it was time.

With shaking hands, she removed her shorts and laid under the canopy of the raft. Her heart beats started to climb. The pain quickly grew worse. There was no way to know if she was dilated enough, but when she had the urge to push, she pushed.

She grabbed the underside of her thighs and tried not to scream out in pain. Sweat began to run down the side of her face. She worried that something was going to go wrong. The umbilical cord could get wrapped around its neck, the baby could be turned the wrong way, or it could come out disfigured.

No matter how hard she kept pushing, nothing seemed to be happening quickly. She dropped her legs and rested her head on the uneven logs, trying to catch her breath. She felt her body tightening before another contraction. She grit her teeth together, lifted her legs, and pushed. She collapsed again, breathing heavily.

"I can't do this... I just can't do it."

She covered her face with her hands as her eyes started to swell with tears. When she felt another wave of pain through, another contraction, she couldn't help but push. She kept pushing, over and over, until she was exhausted. The sun kept steadily moving across the sky, and she worried it was taking too long. She was afraid that if it lasted even another hour, she'd be too tired to push. The baby could suffocate.

Ariana struggled to roll over, then prop herself up onto her hands and knees. The position felt more natural to her, and it was easier for her to breathe that way, rather than lying on her back. She dropped her head between her arms and grit her teeth, pushing as hard as she could. The pain was nearly unbearable, but worth it when she finally heard the baby screaming.

Ariana immediately started to tear up again as she scooped the baby up and started inspecting it. It was a little girl. She had all ten fingers and toes. Her facial features and skin color looked like Anunnaki, like a yautja. The only thing that concerned Ariana was how small she was. She felt barely five pounds, small even for a human baby, and yautja sucklings were over ten pounds.

She knew she still had the afterbirth to deliver, but she fretted over the baby first. Ariana cut the cord, washed her off, and tried to get her to feed. She'd been born a week early, and so tiny. The yautja males were supposed to be shorter. Ariana worried that her baby would grow up to be the smallest yautja female ever. She was relieved as soon as the baby latched onto her nipple. She wrapped her up in soft leather, and let her suckle as long as she wanted.

When she spotted something out in the distance, she was excited at first. She thought she'd finally reached the mainland. As it came closer though, she realized that it was a spaceship on top of the water. Her heart dropped. After all that work, he was already there to take the baby away. A few hours wasn't long enough. No amount of time with her baby would ever be long enough.

Ariana hugged the little girl to her and hid under the rafts canopy. She wouldn't let him take her away. The ramp of his ship landed right next to the raft. He waded out in the water and quickly anchored it to his ship. Anunnaki peeked under the canopy, finding the ooman huddled under it.

"Ariana?"

He'd assumed she'd be happy to see him, and yet she barely moved. He thought she might be sick at first. The water was up to his hips and he leaned his elbows on the raft to get a better look at her. He smelled blood on the wood first, before realizing she had something wrapped up in her arms. He let out a soft trill.

"You had the baby early? Are you ok?"

Ariana nodded.

"Well, is it a boy or girl?"

She swallowed nervously, "Girl."

"Let me see her."

Now the ooman showed some life. She quickly scooted to the very edge of the raft, farthest away from him, "No."

"It is of my blood! It is my child! Hand her over!"

"No!"

As Anunnaki started to climb onto the raft, she carefully slipped into the water. She held the baby up out of the saltwater. She'd swim the rest of the way to the mainland if she had to.

Anunnaki went after her. He looped his arm around her chest and started dragging her up the ship's ramp. She couldn't fight him off without hurting the baby.

"Please, let me go!"

Anunnaki set butt down on the ramp, "What were you doing, getting in the water like that? Are you crazy? Dehydrated? What?"

He watched tears roll down her cheeks, and knew he was being too aggressive. Nine months alone in the jungle was hard enough, and then she'd given birth alone in the middle of the ocean. After searching for her, thinking she was dead, all he wanted was to hold the baby though. He didn't understand why she'd deny him that, unless something was wrong with the child. That though only made him more pushy to hold her, and see for himself.

"Tell me she's healthy at least."

Ariana nodded.

"Then let me see her."

Ariana tensed as he reached for the child, but she let him take her. Anunnaki held her in the crook of his arm and gently unwrapped the leather, getting a good look at her. Under the blanket, she was absolutely the tiniest suckling he'd ever seen. She kept her eyes closed, looking so sleepy. When he rubbed his thumb over her soft skin though, she gripped his finger tightly.

Anunnaki couldn't look away from her, "She is small, but strong. If she's fed plenty, she'll catch up."

"Please don't take her."

Anunnaki tipped his head up some, remembering what he'd told her before he left. The ooman already assumed the worst. They had turned him down as he'd feared. He was supposed to collect his offspring and leave again. Anunnaki wouldn't do it. Even though he'd taken an oath not to switch clans, he never promised not to leave the clan.

He set the child back in her hands, then ran his claws over her scalp, into her hair, "I'm not going to take her away."

Ariana looked up at him, confused, "They said yes?"

"No, they refused you as a member."

"So?"

"So, I left the clan... I am bound by no laws. For my first criminal act as rogue, I intend to kidnap you. We can live on any planet we like-as long as we don't run into any arbitrators."

She knew leaving a clan was serious. Anunnaki was leaving behind his house, and all his belongings as well. He could get punished by an arbitrator if he were ever caught. He was doing it all for her, just to be with her. Ariana was speechless, but a slow smile crept to her lips.

Anunnaki dropped to his knees in front of her, and grabbed a hold of the metal collar around her neck with both hands. The veins in his arms bulged, but he managed to snap the

hinges apart. He tossed the broken collar onto the raft, then turned back to the ooman and his suckling. Her skin color was lighter, but green and grey just like his was. Her eyes were blue, but he knew that could change as she grew older.

“What have you named her?”

“I don’t know. I’ve gone threw a million different names, and I don’t like any of them. I need your help.”

He let out a snort, “Female’s name the pups, not males.”

Ariana pursed her lips at him.

He let out a grumpy rumble, and then said, “I guess I’ve always kinda liked the name Sheriti for a girl.”

“Sheriti... I like that name.”

~Y Diwedd~ (Welsh for “The End”)